





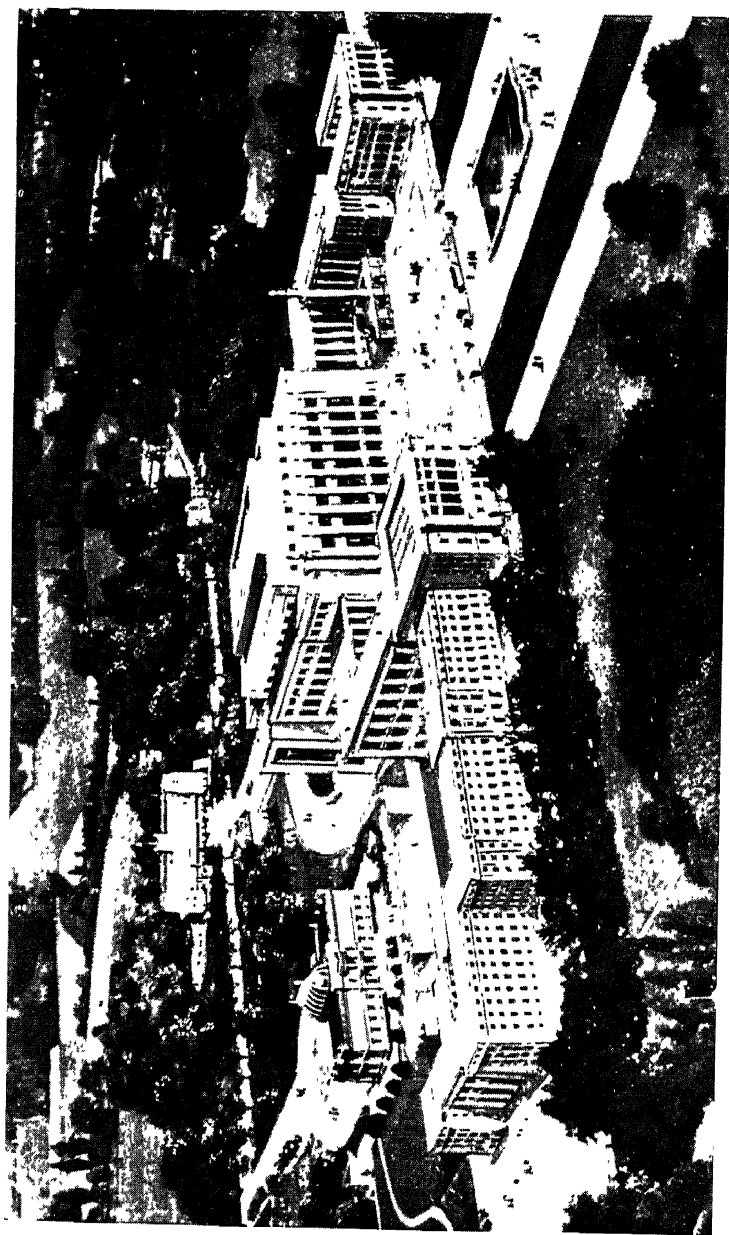


## THE LEAGUE IN OUR TIME









*Keystone*

THE NEW LEAGUE OF NATIONS HEADQUARTERS

# THE LEAGUE

## ITS SUCCESSES AND FAILURES

A Short History of the social  
and political activities  
of the League of Nations

*By*

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*Being the school edition of  
'The League in Our Time'*

J. M. DENT & SONS LTD.  
BEDFORD STREET, LONDON, W.C.2

FIRST PUBLISHED BY BASIL BLACKWELL IN 1933

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THE KEMP HALL PRESS LTD., OXFORD

FIRST PUBLISHED IN THIS REVISED EDITION 1936

## PREFACE TO SCHOOL EDITION

THE younger generation of to-day has been growing up contemporaneously with the most ambitious and extensive political and social experiment that the world has known. On the social side the experiment has brought and continues to bring incontestable benefits to millions of human beings. On the political side the failures have been so much more pronounced than the successes that the international machinery for safeguarding peace appears to be inadequate.

It is right that our younger citizens should understand what the League of Nations set out to do, what it has successfully accomplished, and where it has failed. Only by understanding these things can they begin to face up to the problematic condition of the post-war world which is their uneasy heritage.

In the following pages there is no attempt at giving anything like a comprehensive account of the League of Nations since its inception in 1920; nor has any strict chronological order been followed. A mass of official documents record the activities of sixteen years and any selection from them must be arbitrary. Nevertheless it is hoped that the varied nature of the League's work is sufficiently indicated and its successes and failures fairly enough presented to make the book a suitable introduction for a young student.

It has been brought completely up to date by the 'Additional Matter' at the end.

K. G.

*May, 1936*



## FOREWORD

THE world is passing through a difficult time. Unemployment, poverty, social unrest, wars and rumours of wars, have afflicted every continent. Political crises have accentuated the long-drawn misery of the economic depression. As a remedy for these evils, the policies of nationalism have completely failed. If recent events have done nothing else, they have at least proved that the world is a political and economic unit, and that only world co-operation can mitigate or end our present distress.

At such a moment, any well-informed book on the League of Nations must be of value. The League provides the institutional machinery through which alone effective international co-operation can be brought about. The more that its constitution and its achievements enter the public mind, the better for the world. Miss Gibberd's lively and picturesque account is written principally for those who give little attention to international questions, and who have so far been hostile or indifferent to the League. Her book is a challenge which should shake the self-complacency of any such reader. She holds up to him a new conception of his public duty: "Your true patriot wants to see his country honoured among nations, and to this end will watch his Government critically, will be sensitive to outside opinion, and will support measures that are in the direction of world co-operation."



## FOREWORD

I am sure that this is true, and if Miss Gibberd's book succeeds in bringing home this new conception of patriotism, it will have rendered a service of the most important kind.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

**U**NDER this all too ungenerous heading I wish to express my thanks to a number of people in England and Geneva who have most generously helped me in the task of collecting material for the pages that follow. Particularly I would like to thank Mr. Zilliacus of the League Secretariat who has not only spared me much of his own valuable time but secured me interviews with several of his colleagues, and also Mr. Fanshawe of the English League of Nations Union who has never failed to answer my persistent questions. To these I must add the name of my friend Miss Rachel Goodrich who has read and criticized every chapter from the point of view of that post-War generation whom I chiefly hope may find this book readable.

These brief sentences seem a poor return for all the practical help and the encouragement of which, as I write these words, I am deeply sensible. Nevertheless, I realize that all those who have helped me have done so out of a conviction that world peace and international co-operation cannot be achieved until the meaning of these comfortable phrases are more generally understood. If this book can do a little to that end I shall not feel myself to have been importunate.

K.G.



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## INTRODUCTION

ONE night in 1917 I stood in the road of a completely darkened suburb and listened to a terrible cry of exultation from all over London as a German aeroplane was seen to catch fire and fall slowly down the sky in burning pieces. I was not very old at the time and the experience made a deep impression. I shall always think of that intolerable triumphant cry as a symbol of the Great War.

To one just growing up the War years were a bewildering time. In the pre-War days children were brought up as church-going Christians. I remember that I often sat in church or in Sunday school and learnt that we must love our enemies. Then, quite suddenly, the Germans became our enemies and when we went to church on Sundays we were told that it was right to hate them. Once I heard a parson preach so passionately about God's call to England to fight the Germans that during the last hymn I all but went up to him and offered my services, although I was neither the right age nor sex for the British army.

In our homes, in the shops, at street corners, everywhere, ordinary people used to talk angrily and in very violent language about the Germans and explain what tortures they would like to mete out to the whole race. One had never heard these people talk like this before. It was sometimes rather shocking.

The only people who were silent about the War, I



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remember, were the soldiers who came home on leave. They looked very different from their former selves. At first, they were bronzed and more stalwart in appearance. Then later on they looked drawn and worn. In the last year of the War when thousands of men had been invalided home I remember how one kept meeting a certain haggard expression on the faces of young men.

In England in those War years, even in the country places, there was always a feeling of oppression. Whatever one did there was this sinister background and one could not be quiet without remembering that all the time men were being horribly killed on the battlefield. In some parts of England we could faintly hear the guns in France, and the just audible throbbing was a continual reminder. The more one thought about it all the more tragically stupid it all seemed.

Then it was over. The sense of relief that followed is indescribable. We all became very optimistic. It did not seem impossible that we could make the throwing away of so many lives worth while. The cry had been that the War was 'a war to end war.' The men had died for that end. Now the world would be organized so that war should not happen again. Everything in every way was going to be better. On the bookstalls little pamphlets entitled 'Reconstruction' were everywhere seen. People were talking about a League of Nations.

But when a few months later the Peace Conference began to meet in Paris this almost hilarious optimism had given place to a vengeful spirit. I suppose it was not unnatural. The relief had at first been so blessed; but as we got used to peace again we

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felt deeply resentful for all we had endured and lost. The resentment fastened, of course, on the Germans and particularly on the Kaiser. Popular feeling ran very high and anyone who wanted public support had only to feed it. Thus in the election of early 1919 no candidate had much chance of winning a seat unless he said that he believed in 'Hanging the Kaiser' and 'making Germany pay,' and the newspapers, of course, repeated the same cries.

The next stage was rather tedious. The Peace Conference went on meeting for months and in the end it drew up a very long and complicated treaty which among a great many other things enforced the payment of vast reparations from Germany; but there was no general satisfaction over this, as those who claimed to understand these things kept telling us that you cannot transfer great wealth from one country to another without injuring both countries. This economic fact was all the more irritating because it was difficult to understand. As for the Kaiser, a conference of twentieth-century statesmen could hardly be expected to arrange for his public hanging. He was allowed to retire in quiet to Doorn in Holland.

The day that peace was signed in June 1919 was not memorable as Armistice Day was memorable. There was no spontaneous rejoicing, but there was a holiday and people tried to persuade themselves into gaiety. A good deal of money was spent on bonfires and fireworks, but, if I remember rightly, the general feeling was not unlike that of a person who having reached convalescence after a nearly fatal illness secretly doubts whether life as he then

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finds it is, after all, worth while. Prices were high, influenza had twice ravaged the country, there were stories of a terrible famine in Russia, the re-absorption of the demobilized soldiers into ordinary jobs was proving difficult and there were already ominous signs of general unemployment. Against this background we read in the newspapers the rather dull explanations of the long Peace Treaty that pleased nobody. Among the provisions there was a plan for a League of Nations, but it sounded very theoretical and excited little interest.

It was four years later that I first went to Geneva. In the meantime one had gradually realized that the League was in being. Most people assumed, though, that it counted for little. Only occasionally did we come across someone who believed in it.

But in Geneva it was different. To Geneva came interested visitors and hundreds of journalists from all the world over. There, too, were the permanent staffs of the Secretariat and the I.L.O. and in the month of which I write there were also the delegations to the Fifth Assembly. Suddenly one lived in an exciting international atmosphere and everyone was talking about the same thing. It was not so much that everyone believed in the League as then constituted, as that everyone saw its amazing possibilities. It was because of this that we elbowed our way into the Assembly Hall, or lingered in the street outside watching delegates arrive; it was this that made us talk to everyone everywhere, struggling recklessly through language difficulties. In the packed, stuffy gallery strange people clutched your arm, in the streets they stopped you and asked for

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your opinion, in restaurants they confided their hopes of world peace and took your address. I can still see the enthusiastic faces and hear the excited voices. And I can vividly recall to mind the experience of looking down for the first time on what was the centre of all this interest—the Fifth Assembly of the League.

That was ten years ago and since then we have become so accustomed to international gatherings that the spectacle of some hundred and fifty people from fifty different countries, even if they are all notable people, hardly seems momentous.

But then an international conference was a new thing. And it was all the more significant because the War seemed only just over. Our War memories were very vivid. At home many people still talked hysterically about their former enemies. Ordinary travel facilities had not long been resumed. Everywhere there were still outward signs of war. It was in this kind of world that one looked down on the assembled delegates, heard their protestations of faith in the new organization, listened to the tumultuous applause with which they greeted each other's speeches, and watched their nods and smiles and handshakes as foreign minister encountered foreign minister. One knew that underneath all this goodwill and the so often repeated desire for peace there were doubts and suspicions and the traditional distrust. But that so soon after the War this tremendous and revolutionary experiment should be so far begun was thrilling.

I came back from Geneva a convert, not to the principle of internationalism, for that I had accepted

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before, but to its romance. Both in the Assembly and out of it one had experienced this new groping for a common humanity under international differences. There one saw people who were mutually foreigners not shunning one another, but trying to understand and collaborate with one another. This struggle was often difficult, it was sometimes laughable, it could be tiresome, but on a long view it was exhilarating and magnificent. And what was the purpose of it all? To combine in attacking the misfortunes common to humanity and in the new-created fellowship to find security from the thing that oppressed us most—war and the fear of war. The phrases in the preamble of the Covenant, ‘international co-operation’ and ‘the promotion of peace,’ took on a revolutionary significance.

I remember the political shock of my return to England after that first visit. No one seemed particularly aware of the League. The speeches that had been cheered to the echo in Geneva were dully summarized in the British press, and the new developments that we had hailed with delight went without comment. Even the people who believed in the League were rather vague about it.

In the years that followed the League steadily got a better press and knowledge and interest spread. But always after one's return from Geneva it was a surprise to realize afresh the indifference at home. It seemed as if here we only had the dry bones. Newspapers summarized the doings of Assembly, Council and Commissions without conveying anything of the drama. People wanted peace, knew the League was trying to secure it, but they did not see

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it as the great experiment of the twentieth century, an experiment that could only succeed if backed by ordinary people.

Perhaps it is too much to expect the older generation to see the League in this light. They are too rooted in the past. They cannot shake off the conviction that what has always been will continue to be, even though history refutes it. But now there is growing up a generation that cannot remember war. In its earliest days it was surrounded by the most fervent hopes of peace, and itself helped to inspire them. Children born during the War or soon afterwards seemed to have arrived in a threatened world and those of us who can remember that time can call to mind the special poignancy that attached to birth in those days of so much death. Parents, then, deeply desired that their children might be born to live.

It is only too apparent to-day that the grown-up world has inadequately protected the new generation from war. If the young are to live they must see to it themselves. It is they who must make the League work. And, after all, it is a task more fitted for them than for older people. The experience of war stirred the older generation to construct and start the League, but they have been afraid to drive it. They run all the time on lowest gear and counsel caution. No wonder that this slow moving machine attracts no general attention. Only those who know its tremendous possibilities are interested. It waits for the young and unconservative, who are not afraid to break with the past, to leap in and drive with speed, even with recklessness—there are some things that might with advantage be run over.

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I began this book two years ago with the idea of proving to any of the younger generation who would do me the honour of reading it that the League is not the dull affair that so much indifference would suggest, but a most absorbing drama. In preparing to write it I have talked to many people engaged in League work, watched the deliberations of Assembly, Council, and Commissions, and read volumes of reports and minutes. The further I went the more absorbing this experiment in international co-operation became and my deep concern was how adequately to write of this drama. This concern deepened as I came to the end of the book because the indifference at which I would launch my bolt changed into an irritable impatience. This arose because of the Disarmament Conference and the Sino-Japanese dispute. Although they had not supported the League in these two ventures, the indifferent people complained bitterly when the League did not speedily come off with success. And now this irritable impatience with the League is begetting in some quarters a devil-may-care attitude. There is a growing cynical despair and a sense that war is part of man's destiny. But evolution points in another direction. That this interdependent world should ultimately form itself into a society for the common good of all members seems as natural and inevitable as that individuals once found that their only security and hope of progress lay in becoming the law-abiding citizens of a state. The only question is, shall we accomplish this new order *now*, shall we bring this first attempt to fruition, or shall we throw it over? We have,

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thanks to the bitter experience of the last world war, somewhat suddenly evolved a League of Nations. It is not quite complete, marred by imperfect construction, rather timidly used, and most inadequately supported. But here it is and, in so far as it has been used, it has, as I hope the following pages will show, a record of accomplishment that would have seemed a quixotic dream if foretold in the pre-War days. Nevertheless the old habit of war threatens to reassert itself and, in spite of war memorials all over the country reminding us of a million British young men who died in the hope of stopping war, the League may dissolve and we may again be involved in a yet more horrible and insane nightmare accomplishing nothing.

Unless we fight against it. Of all mistaken fallacies there is none more absurd than that which confuses pacifism with passivity. All real life involves fighting and never is the need to fight more challenging than when outworn ways of thought and action, along with the vested interests that belong to them, have to be annihilated. Wilberforce had to fight for the abolition of slavery in England and Shaftesbury for the abolition of child labour.

Obviously the abolition of war will require much more strenuous fighting. What we need is a generation who will be as ready to fight for this as the War-generation was willing to fight—only to fight differently. It needs a militant pacifism to drive the League to triumph in our time.

WYCHWOOD SCHOOL, OXFORD.

*May 1933.*





## CHAPTER I

### THE LEAGUE AS SEEN FROM GENEVA

A HEADMASTER who was an enthusiast about the League of Nations once called his school together and said: 'Boys! What do you think? Albania has joined the League!' The school dutifully applauded, but as they filed out one boy was overheard to say to another: 'Well, anyway, I bet it won't beat Aston Villa.'

It is a curious fact that the people who recognize the League as the tremendous historical event of our time have, for the most part, failed to make other people understand what it really is. The schoolboy was nearer the mark than many, since, at all events, the League did for him mean a *league*. Many grown-up people, on the other hand, evidently think of it as a group of idealists at Geneva who have set themselves up to stop war. It is a pity, perhaps, that we did not keep closer to the French name. In France they call the League the *Société des Nations*. Could we have ever come to think of a Society of Nations as anything else but what the words literally stand for? Perhaps we could. Perhaps the real difficulty lies not in the name but in the idea. To think of the countries of the world as having formed themselves into a society is doubtless a strain on that part of the mind which deals with facts. The League is a revolutionary event.

We cannot, however, begin to understand the

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League until we realize that it is a society,—a society that only differs fundamentally from other societies in that each individual member is not a person but a nation. Like other societies the League works through the decisions of annual meetings and by means of an executive committee, or Council, and like other societies it has its head offices and its staff. Also, like every other society its success varies according to the backing it gets from its members. But there is a rule in the Covenant (which is the League's book of rules) saying that countries who join the League must be self-governing. This each Member-State professes to be. Obviously then the success of the League must depend, not so much on the ministers who represent their several countries, as on the opinions of the mass of ordinary people behind them.

You cannot, of course, see the League any more than you can see the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children or the League of Mercy. To see either of these organizations you would have to collect all those who belonged, and also any secretaries or clerks employed to help carry on their work. To see the League you would have to collect all the populations of fifty-seven countries as well as several hundred people employed as the League's special staff. There are some people who having passed through Geneva during a summer holiday and paused before a certain building beside the Lake have said that they have 'seen the League.' They might just as well stand outside the head offices of the Salvation Army in Queen Victoria Street and say that they have seen the Salvation Army. Neverthe-

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less, because Geneva is the scene of most of the League's important meetings—its annual Assembly, its Council and committee meetings—and because hundreds of people who form the permanent staff live and work there, you can, by going to Geneva, undoubtedly watch a good deal of the League's activity. It is the best place to begin. Let us visit it.

Here then is the city chosen to be the headquarters of the World Society, a typical Swiss town at the end of a deep blue lake, wearing an appearance of festival, because the hotels have hung out great flags to show what delegations are their guests. Beyond the lake are the mountains, usually hidden in mist; but on a clear day the Mont Blanc snow-capped range will seem to have appeared suddenly out of the sky.

It is September, the month in which the Assembly meets. Perhaps this gathering of national leaders, the most spectacular piece of League machinery, would be your first interest. But let any Genevois know that you are here to see the League at work and he will unhesitatingly direct you to the offices beside the lake.

To the people of Geneva this *is* the League of Nations, for this is concrete and permanent. The Assembly fills Geneva with its delegates and newspaper reporters only once or, perhaps, twice a year, the Council sometimes meets in London or Paris or Madrid instead of in this city, but from one year's end to another a band of international workers—Europeans, Africans, Americans, Asiatics; typists,

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translators, directors, secretaries, porters, librarians, cleaners—come into this building every week-day morning and go home every evening, carrying out according to their several callings the routine work of the League.

The technical name for this office (and the name is also applied to the staff within) is the *Secretariat*; the picture postcards which show the front view from the lake, with swans in the foreground, call it: '*le Palais des Nations*'; but its appearance from without is neither that of an office, nor a palace. It looks like a large hotel, and that indeed is what it was before the League bought it for its temporary headquarters thirteen years ago. Now it houses the first International Civil Service—for the employees within do for the Assembly and the Council what Government servants in Whitehall do for Parliament and the Cabinet.

The hotel appearance still remains to some extent inside, but at the top of the short flight of stairs where once wealthy visitors made plans for a day's enjoyment you push your way through groups of gesticulating gentlemen talking in languages that you cannot recognize. They all wear the conventional European dress—except for an occasional fez or turban—but their complexions and physiognomy will tell you that some of them have come here from Africa, Asia, or South America.

Who are they?

Remember it is the time of the League Assembly and that every one of the fifty-seven countries that make up the League of Nations has probably sent its delegation to Geneva. The three chief delegates,

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which is the representation allowed each country, are not likely to be here. They are away at the other side of the city in the Assembly Hall. But here you may find some of the substitute delegates, the technical advisers, and also the journalists, talking to each other and to members of the Secretariat staff. Some of them, also, may be experts. In the course of the last thirteen years the League has often found it necessary to set up committees, or commissions, of people well qualified to investigate certain subjects. The members of these commissions are chosen not for their nationality, but for their qualifications.

If you look on the notice board you will see which of these commissions are meeting on this particular day. You may read as follows:

Room E. European Commission.

Room A. Central Opium Board.

Room B. Committee of Communication and Transit.

Room D. Economic Commission sub-committee.

Look in at one of these committee meetings and you will find perhaps twelve people sitting round a table, with two interpreters and two stenographers. At the far end of the room there may be some journalists and members of the public. The business may be lively but it is mostly unsensational, except to those who are susceptible to the vibrations of a new movement in the slow hammering away at obstacles to a united and more prosperous world.

There is nothing to startle the eye as you explore the interior of the Secretariat. There is a good library,

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but there are many larger and better furnished; there is the famous glass room so-called because three sides of it are windows. Here, where once the hotel visitors took their meals and looked out on the sparkling lake, the Council of the League meets round a horse-shoe table while a dense crowd of journalists and visitors, their backs to the windows and the view, press to see and listen. Upstairs you will find bedrooms and bathrooms turned into offices. On the first floor are the rooms set apart for the Secretary-General, the head of the Secretariat staff and the central point of this international machine.

The work of the Secretariat you will find is divided into sections. Here are the offices of the Opium Section, there the rooms given over to Economics and Finance, and farther on you will find the Health Section. Arriving finally at the Information Section (at this time of the year rather fatigued by journalists and visitors) you want to know the size of the entire staff and are told that counting the charwomen and the night watchman there are 600 employees and that they are drawn from more than fifty countries.

But whatever the Genevois may say, the Secretariat is not the League of Nations, it is only one part of the machinery, and to the world at large, the Assembly is a more significant part. To see this must be your next purpose.

One day it will be possible to walk straight out of the Secretariat Offices into a fine and spacious Assembly Hall. But for the present you have to travel twenty minutes in a tram to get from one to

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the other. The Assembly is temporarily accommodated in the *Bâtiment Electoral*, a hall belonging to a business firm. It has been especially equipped for its new purpose. The floor is furnished with desks for the delegates. At one end is a platform for the president and his interpreter, and a lower platform or rostrum in front of it for delegates who come up to speak. Facing this, at the far end of the hall, are tiers of seats for distinguished visitors—this is known as the Diplomatsists' Gallery. At the sides there are places for the more important journalists and high up, running all round the hall, is a gallery for the other reporters and for the general public. From here you look down on the delegates assembled below.

There in strict alphabetical order of countries, they sit in rows at their long desks, giving something of the appearance of a school. If this is the first day of the Assembly you will be struck by a great demonstration of friendliness as the world's politicians renew acquaintance. A delegate from Peru turns round and shakes hands with the man from Poland who is just behind. A little way away from him the foreign minister of Czechoslovakia gets up and crosses the room to shake hands with the foreign minister from Belgium who has just come in. The last delegates are arriving, but their passage to their appointed places is slow since they constantly stop to greet the delegates they pass on their way. The smiles are so friendly, the handshakes so prolonged and fervent, that one remembers with difficulty the political disagreements that will presently appear in their speeches—although even



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then decorated with phrases betokening goodwill.

Presently a bell rings and everyone's attention is turned towards the Presidential Chair. The new Assembly is opened by the chairman of the Council at the time—that office falling to members of the Council in turn. But he only presides over the Assembly until that great body has chosen its own president for the coming Session, and this is the first business of the new Assembly.

It is an interesting proceeding to watch, for every country is summoned to put its vote in the ballot box by an usher who stands at the rostrum and in a stentorian voice calls the roll of the League. It is customary on this occasion to use the French names. Thus: '*Afrique du Sud! Albanie! Allemagne!*' and so on till finally: '*Yougoslavia!*' At each summons the chief delegate, nowadays usually the country's foreign minister, rises in his place and takes his paper up to the platform where he drops it in the box and steps down the other side. As he returns to his place he again takes the opportunity of greeting old acquaintances, so that the voting is done to the accompaniment of handshakes and whispered greetings.

To be president of the Assembly is a great task, and it is one that now seems to be given for real qualities of chairmanship in a particular man, rather than as an honour to each country in turn. When the result of the election is announced there is tremendous applause and the successful delegate takes his place in the presidential chair and addresses the Assembly. The issue of the election has been uncertain until the last, but on each occasion it is

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known that the choice lies between two or three people whose names have been passed between one delegate and another since their arrival in Geneva. Presumably every likely candidate, therefore, prepares a suitable speech in case he should be elected. On one occasion the new president began his address by thanking the delegates for the great and entirely unexpected honour conferred on him and his country—and then took from his inside pocket a typed address which he proceeded to read.

This opening address is usually given in either English or French, these being the two official languages of the League, and when the applause has subsided at the end it must be translated into the other language. Every speech or remark in the Assembly is thus translated. A delegate may speak in German, Danish, Irish or any language he chooses, but in that case a double translation must follow.

In order to avoid the loss of time to the Assembly from interpretation a wealthy American has lately been making an interesting experiment at his own expense. At the Twelfth Assembly in September of 1931 every delegate and every journalist found himself provided with earphones and a small switchboard. This apparatus enabled him to listen to a special interpreter instead of the actual speaker, and to hear the speech in his own tongue at the same time that it was actually being delivered in another language. The interpreters sat in specially screened seats just below the speaker's rostrum. With what seemed to be a strained attention they followed his words, whispering each phrase or sentence into a receiver as it was spoken. The advantage of this

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ingenious invention was doubtful. Many delegates felt that the ordinary method of translation, although sometimes tedious, gave opportunity for pondering and prevented a too hasty reaction.

After the presidential speech the Assembly, if it is an ordinary annual Assembly and not one called for a special purpose, settles down to its ordinary business. First of all there is the Report of the Secretary-General to be discussed. This gives an account of the League's work during the past year. It shows what the Council has accomplished, what the various commissions of experts have been doing, what countries have ratified the decisions of the last Assembly, what new countries have subscribed to recent conventions.<sup>1</sup> The Assembly meets, for the most part, twice a day and any delegate who wishes to speak sends word beforehand to the President. As the Report makes reference to all the activities of the League, any delegate can speak out his mind on any matter of world interest without being considered irrelevant and even matters not included in the report at all are often spoken on at this, the first stage of an Assembly. A Member-State has, perhaps, recently suffered from an earthquake and so a vote of sympathy is moved by the foreign secretary from a fellow Member. Another Member-State may have received some help from the League—a loan, perhaps, or advice from the Secretariat on how to organize a system of public education—and so her chief delegate rises to express his thanks. Other speakers touch on subjects as unexpected and

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary.

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varied as the protection of sea birds from oil discharged at sea, prisons, forged money, the catching of whales, authors' rights, the nationality of married women, and educational films, as well as the more familiar questions of disarmament, drugs, economic troubles, mandates and so on.

The first days of general discussion being over the Assembly divides itself up into smaller groups known as the Assembly Committees or Commissions.<sup>1</sup> There are six of these, and to each one is assigned a section of the Report to be examined. Only one delegate from each country goes to each committee and substitute delegates can be sent instead. Thus the work is got through more speedily. Each Assembly committee is expected to come to some conclusions about its own section of the Report. It may approve or disapprove of the work there recorded. It may have new ideas as to what can be done next year. Whatever its conclusions may be they are drawn up and handed to one of its members who is called the *rapporteur*. Full, or plenary, meetings of the Assembly then follow and each *rapporteur* in turn goes to the rostrum and declares the opinions and resolutions of his committee. The full Assembly will listen to these and probably endorse them, although perhaps with some amendments.

To watch an Assembly meeting day by day is to make many discoveries. For instance, you will

<sup>1</sup> Commission being the French word for Committee these words are always synonyms when used in connection with the League. The Assembly Committees should not be confused with the various committees of experts set up to deal with special subjects. See Glossary under Assembly for list of Assembly Committees.

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perhaps be surprised to notice a display of patriotism. It is the greatest mistake to suppose that when the representatives of different nations meet together they forget their nationality. They obviously remember it acutely. 'The country which I have the honour to represent,' or 'No country is more concerned in this subject than mine,' or 'My country, though ranking among the smaller nations, can, I think, be said to be among the first in this matter'—thus the delegates at the Assembly begin their speeches. Nor is this national pride only in the body of the hall. When, a mere spectator, you hear your own foreign minister's speech cheered to the echo by the rest of the world, who in the public gallery feels so national as you and your compatriots? You now know the meaning of patriotism better than you ever knew it singing *Land of Hope and Glory* at home and it is a happier thrill than was ever induced by a military band and marching soldiers, for it brings no thoughts of death.

Another but less surprising discovery will be that the delegates make a great parade of their desire for world peace. There is always much talk about outlawing war and avoiding a repetition of the tragedy of 1914. The reiteration of this purpose together with the constant handshaking (no delegate travels from his seat to the door or from the rostrum back to his seat without grasping several hands on the way) produce in the Assembly Hall an atmosphere of peaceable intention. After breathing this for some days on end, however, you may perhaps ask yourself whether this is all? Will this goodwill of itself stop wars and promote the

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co-operation of the nations? However much you may enjoy this daily display of international friendship you will be compelled to admit that this will not suffice when the very newspapers that the delegates stuff into their pockets describe army manœuvres on Surrey commons, a mock air attack on Rome, or an anti-German speech delivered in a provincial town by a French minister.

But there is no need to be cynical. It is not hypocrisy which makes the delegates declare for peace at Geneva in spite of the ordinary preparations for war at home. They are here to assist in the most stupendous undertaking that has ever confronted statesmen and if they talk too much of their desires for peace it is only that it is so much easier to praise the end than to devise the means. Besides, there are plenty of realists among them—people like the late Dr. Nansen of Norway who hectored successive assemblies into confirming his plans for the repatriation of hundreds of prisoners of war and thousands of refugees. Again and again, especially in the assembly committees, practical and determined men and women will get up to criticize, exhort, and persuade their fellow delegates into decision.

The Assembly is sometimes spoken of as a World Parliament, but this is a picturesque rather than an accurate way of naming it. A parliament is chiefly a law-making institution. But the Assembly cannot make laws for the world. If it could, the League would be a World State, and not merely a society of states. It may happen in the future that the resolutions made at Geneva will automatically be binding

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in the countries concerned in them. At present they have to be ratified by the governing authority of each country before they become operative. For at present every country insists that its national sovereignty must remain unimpaired. The League therefore is a paradox wherein sovereign states constantly limit their freedom of action.

A session of the Council usually takes place sometime in September and this smaller and less spectacular international gathering every visitor to the Assembly also hopes to see.

It will be remembered that the Council meets in the Glass Room at the Secretariat. Members of the public must usually stand along the walls behind the massed journalists. It is difficult to see and to hear, but as will appear later in the book, there have been some tense moments in the Council meetings when the very atmosphere has seemed charged with excitement. In the autumn of 1931, for instance, after the fall of Mukden, you would have gladly stood in bodily discomfort at one end of the Glass Room, unable to see anything but the shoulders of the person in front of you, while you strained to hear from the distant Council table the eloquent appeal of M. Alfred Sze.

The ordinary business of the Council, as distinct from its special function in international disputes, is to overlook the work of the expert committees and to make recommendations to the Assembly. It is composed of one delegate from each of fourteen states, five of whom are the Great Powers. The remaining nine seats go by election at the Assembly. If the Assembly is called a World

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Parliament the Council might be called the World Cabinet, but again the term is inaccurate. It would be better described as the Executive Committee of this Society of States.

One other League institution still remains to be seen before you leave Geneva. Take a tram to the outskirts of the city where a great park slopes down to the lake and you will find some new gates and a straight wide drive leading up to a large white building of modern design. This is the *Bureau International de Travail*, known better to English-speaking peoples as the International Labour Office. Inside you will see a handsome hall and staircase, a stained-glass window, a picture, some sculpture in bronze. Pass from room to room and wherever you go the bareness intended for the conduct of business is graced by things of value and beauty: tapestry, pictures, panelling, vases. Thus have the working peoples of different countries decorated their headquarters with the art or craftsmanship peculiar to their race. The great picture in the entrance hall representing timber workers by a lake side was a gift from Finland, the table and chairs below it were presented by South Africa, the panelling of the impressive Council Room is in wood given by India, the workmanship being a present from the British Empire. There are carpets (made by refugees) from Greece, tapestry from France, sculpture from Belgium, stained-glass from Germany, prints from Japan.

This International Labour organization is a twin sister of the League. It has its own Assembly, called the Annual Conference, its own Council, called the



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Governing Body and this new building, the first League building to be completed, is its own Secretariat. To the Conference and the Governing Body there come, not statesmen and politicians, but employers and employees, together with government representatives who are more concerned with industrial problems than foreign policies. The Conventions passed each year are concerned with such matters as the length of the working day, conditions of labour for seamen, the employment of women and children, forced labour.

When the I.L.O. was set up by Part XIII of the Peace Treaty, to exist side by side with the League of Nations and, in a sense, to be part of it, the signatories of the Treaty declared:

Whereas the League of Nations has for its object the establishment of universal peace, and such a peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice;

And whereas conditions of labour exist involving such injustice, hardship and privation to large numbers of people as to produce unrest so great that the peace and harmony of the world are imperilled; and an improvement of those conditions is urgently required;

Whereas also the failure of any nation to adopt humane conditions of labour is an obstacle in the way of other nations which desire to improve the conditions in their own countries:

THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES, moved by sentiments of justice and humanity as well as by the desire to secure the permanent peace of the world, agree to the following.

(Then follows the Charter of the I.L.O.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See books for further reading at end of chapter.

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So great and novel an institution deserves more than this passing mention; but others have recounted its history, and it has seemed best to confine this book to the League of Nations proper.

Coming away from the I.L.O. you will do well to cross the road and ascend the hill opposite by a muddy lane. Presently you will come to a scene of great activity. Here is a vast building nearing completion. From the dust and debris at its foot, partly hidden by steam cranes and scaffolding, it rises in fine proportions. It will take you a long time to walk round it. It is bigger than anything you have seen in Geneva. It is of modern design and it seems meant for the future. For several years five architects from five different nations have collaborated over the planning of it. It is presently to supplant the rather dingy hotel by the lake side and the improvised assembly hall in the *Bâtiment Electoral*. It is the future headquarters of the World Society.

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## CHAPTER II

### INTERNATIONAL DISPUTES

#### *I. Greece and Bulgaria*

THE mountain pass of Demir-Kapu lies some miles north of the Ægean Sea. Across the road goes the frontier line that separates one Balkan state from another. To the south is Greece and looking that way it is natural to remember Alexander the Great whose empire began in these hills, and Socrates who once lived in an island beyond the horizon. From a high point here we could almost see Olympus. Turning the other way you face Bulgaria where peasants are said to achieve longevity by drinking sour milk and where the scent called *attar of roses* is made from some of the finest rose gardens in the world. Beyond the mountains is the capital, Sofia, and there you can still find an old church dedicated to the Divine Wisdom which gave the city its name.

It is a bare and unfrequented countryside. Except for the Greek sentry on one side of the pass and the Bulgarian sentry on the other, no human being is in sight. Only wood-cutters and shepherds come this way and the nearest village is a three hours' walk from here. You will, however, whichever way you proceed, come almost immediately upon a few soldiers and their solitary dwelling. They are there to relieve their respective sentries and to protect the frontier. It is no wonder that being left thus for

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months at a time they are depressed by monotony and solitude and it is natural that the two posts often visit each other to exchange food and to talk. It is also natural that the monotony should sometimes breed quarrels.

Early on a Monday afternoon in the autumn of 1925 rifle shots suddenly sounded on this frontier. The little band of soldiers from both posts rushed out armed, to find the Greek sentry dead. They took cover in the hills and fired at one another. The firing was heard in the distance. Peasants and soldiers came up the road on either side. Where there had been monotony now there was panic. A Greek captain galloped up the pass. A little way from the frontier he dismounted and ordering a soldier to carry the white flag of truce in front of him he advanced towards Bulgaria to seek a parley. A few yards from the frontier he fell, mortally wounded. On the Greek side the terrified soldiers and peasants were saying that a Bulgarian invasion was about to begin. Darkness gradually fell and still there was the intermittent sound of rifle fire.

At three o'clock the next morning the Chief of the General Staff in Athens was suddenly roused to receive a telephone call from Salonika—the nearest Greek town to the scene of the affray. The message reported the death at the pass of the Greek sentry as well as of Captain Vassiladis who had sought a truce, and declared these incidents to be the beginning of a planned attack from Bulgaria. It was alarming news.

The Army Chiefs and the Ministry of War were soon in a state of excitement and all kinds of rumours went round Athens. At 10.30 a.m. another alarming

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message was received. It contained the report of a Greek intelligence officer who had gone to the pass to investigate, and the message received at Athens ran thus:

The Bulgarians have attacked with a battalion and are occupying the hill-top.

Quickly the Greek Minister of War gave his orders. If Greece was being invaded there must be a counter-invasion. Two Army corps were to go into action. The Bulgarian town of Petritch was to be the objective. Commanding officers received instructions and made their plans. At 6 o'clock on Thursday morning the Greek soldiers began the invasion. At 8.30 a.m. on Saturday Petritch was to be stormed with two battalions, three batteries, and two squadrons.

The scene now shifts to Bulgaria. It is 5 o'clock on Monday evening, the day of the outbreak. The War Office in Sofia receives a message that there has been some firing in the pass at Demir-Kapu. It seems to be a frontier squabble between opposing sentries. Such things have happened before and lead to nothing. The General Staff say the incident must be stopped at once, and think no more about it. Tuesday passes with no more news. On Wednesday night there is a message for the Chief of the General Staff, but he is taking part in some important ceremonies. In fact, there is no work being done at the War Office this evening and so the message does not reach the Chief until about 9 o'clock the next morning. It reports that Greek troops seem to be moving as if for an attack and asks for reinforcements at the frontier.

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Now Sofia is alarmed. Everyone talks of a Greek invasion. The General Staff orders some troops and equipment to be taken by rail and by lorry to Petritch. But the Colonel in command is given the following order:

Make only slight resistance, protect the fugitive and panic-stricken population, prevent the spread of panic in the Struma Valley, and do not expose the troops to unnecessary losses, in view of the fact that the incident has been laid before the Council of the League of Nations, which is expected to stop the invasion.

Early on Saturday morning the reinforcements have arrived at Petritch. Outside is the Greek army waiting for the hour of attack. But the Bulgarian troops receive the following order from Sofia:

Should the Greeks attack, our troops will abstain from resistance.

We must now proceed speedily to Geneva and thence to Paris.

In the early hours of Friday morning the Secretary-General of the League of Nations received at Geneva a telegram from the Bulgarian Minister for Foreign Affairs describing how his country has been invaded, and appealing under Articles 10 and 11 of the Covenant for an immediate meeting of the Council of the League. The telegram ended thus:

Convinced that the Council will do its duty, the Bulgarian Government is maintaining its order to Bulgarian troops not to resist the invaders of its territory.

Quickly acting under the powers conferred on him

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by Article 11 (paragraph 1) of the Covenant, Sir Eric Drummond, then Secretary-General, summoned a meeting of the Council. But first he telephoned to M. Briand at Paris. M. Briand was at that time President of the Council. He and Sir Eric Drummond agreed that the meeting had better be at Paris on the following Monday, October 26, at 6 p.m. M. Briand then sent telegrams to the Greek and Bulgarian Governments, reminding them of their pledges under the Covenant and exhorting them to withdraw their troops into their own countries and to engage in no hostilities until the Council had met and considered the trouble.

On the Monday evening, exactly a week after the first shots had been fired, the Council met in Paris. Neither Greece nor Bulgaria were Council members, but in accordance with the Covenant<sup>1</sup> they were both represented.

M. Briand began by reading the original telegram received from Bulgaria, his own telegrams to both parties in the dispute, and their telegraphed replies. He then made a brief statement pointing out that the Council was faced with a double task: one, to ascertain the truth behind the divergent explanations of the two countries; the other, the more urgent one, of discovering whether hostilities had ceased.

The Council agreed that the second question must be dealt with first and promptly.

M. Marfoff of Bulgaria was then invited to speak on this point.

Having expressed his gratitude to the Council for meeting on the matter he began on a long story of

<sup>1</sup>Article 7, par. 3.



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the incident—only to be politely interrupted by M. Briand who said that that must wait. For the moment the Council only wanted to know if Bulgaria had complied with the request to stop fighting and to withdraw troops into her own territory. To this M. Marfoff replied decisively that Bulgarians had never entered Greek territory at all. ‘We should,’ he said, ‘be quite prepared to comply with the request which has been addressed to us to withdraw troops, but we have never crossed the frontier.’

M. Carapanos of Greece then spoke. He said: ‘I have to state that the Greek Government agrees without hesitation to comply with the invitation of the President of the Council to evacuate Bulgarian soil as soon as the Bulgarians have quitted Greek territory.’

M. Briand then suggested a private meeting of the Council without the representatives of the two countries concerned. Later, however, M. Marfoff and M. Carapanos were invited to join the private consultation.

Then, again, the meeting was thrown open to the public and the Press. Sir Austen Chamberlain, who had been made *rapporteur* for the Council, stated the Council’s point of view, which was that the Council was not satisfied that military operations had ceased and that it requested M. Marfoff and M. Carapanos to inform it within twenty-four hours that the Bulgarian and Greek Governments had given unconditional orders for the withdrawal of troops behind frontiers, and within sixty hours that the troops actually had been withdrawn and had been warned that the resumption of firing would be

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severely punished. Sir Austen Chamberlain further said the Council was asking the French, British, and Italian Governments each to send a colonel to the scene of conflict, there to report to the Council as soon as fighting ceased.

Next morning the Council met again to begin dealing with their second task, that of discovering the truth about the quarrel. M. Maroff was now invited to make his long speech. He gave a detailed account of the events of the preceding week, laying all the blame on Greece. 'From the outset,' he said, 'the Bulgarian Government's attitude has been absolutely straightforward and correct.' M. Carapanos then made a speech of similar length contradicting most of M. Maroff's statements. 'The aggressors,' he said, 'who have violated and occupied without any provocation a foreign territory are the Bulgarians. The Greek army was obliged to defend itself.'

At the next meeting of the Council, not many hours later, both M. Maroff and M. Carapanos produced telegrams from their governments stating that in conformity with the Council's request troops were being withdrawn. This was confirmed the next day by a telegram from the French, British, and Italian colonels who had been sent to Demir-Kapu. Their message ran as follows:

Both parties finally undertook :

- (1) To refrain from any further hostile act;
- (2) To warn their troops that any resumption of firing would be visited with the severest penalties.

Peace, then, had been restored. The immediate task was accomplished. But the truth must be

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ascertained. The Council decided to send a special Commission of Enquiry to visit the governments at Athens and at Sofia as well as the scene of action, and to collect all possible information.

A week later the Commission set out. It consisted of five people: a British ambassador, a French general, an Italian general, a Swedish minister, a Dutch member of parliament. There were also four members of the Secretariat attached as secretaries. The Enquiry took twenty days and when the Council met early in December the report of the Commissioners was ready. It appeared that there had been ill-feeling for some time between the peoples on either side of the frontier, chiefly because, through the re-arrangement of frontiers after the War, some people had been dispossessed of their land. It also appeared that the soldiers at these frontier posts were left too long in isolation and that the men appointed for this work were not the best types of soldier.

It had been impossible to decide who had fired the first shot or whether the Greek captain seeking a truce had been killed intentionally or by accident. It was probable that in the beginning the Bulgarian soldiers had crossed the frontier to the extent of some forty or fifty metres, but there had been no real invasion of Greece by Bulgaria. The alarming telephone message received in Athens stating that the Bulgarians were attacking with a battalion and were occupying a hill top, was an excited officer's way of summarizing the message of the intelligence officer who had gone to the spot. The original message was:

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I beg to report that according to information, Bulgarian forces amount to one battalion. Bulgarians possess machine guns.

The Commissioners criticized the Greek Government for violating the Covenant and recommended that Greece should pay Bulgaria reparations for the loss of life and property incurred by the invasion by Greek troops. They also pointed out that Bulgarian civilians near the frontier were carrying arms, which was a breach of the Peace Treaty. They further made various recommendations to ensure happier conditions on the frontier in the future. Incidentally they pointed out that M. Briand's first telegrams to both governments, reminding them of their pledges under the Covenant and asking them to cease hostilities had been just in time to save Petritch. The Greek Government receiving the message and learning that the Council was to meet rescinded the order to attack. The commanding officer at Petritch received this order at 6 o'clock on the Saturday morning. It will be remembered that the town was to be attacked at 8.30.

The recommendations of the Commission, which included a plan by which two neutral commissioners should reside near the frontier, were accepted by the Council and by the two countries concerned. The Council asked to be kept informed by both countries as to how things were on both sides of the frontier. A few months later it learnt that another frontier flare up had been successfully stopped by the neutral commissioners. After that the reports were reassuring. Peace, in fact, was restored.

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### *II. The World Court: France and Turkey*

Nearly a year after the frontier affair in the mountain pass at Demir-Kapu, a midnight incident, occurring not far from the scene of the previous dispute, brought about another international quarrel.

It happened in the Ægean Sea. In the middle of an August night two boats, one carrying letters and the other coal, ran into each other. The collier, a Turkish boat, sank before all her crew could be saved. Eight of them were drowned. The mail boat, which was a French steamer called *Lotus*, survived the mishap and made her way to Constantinople.

When she arrived there the following day Turkish policemen came on board and began to ask the officers and crew about the collision. They especially questioned the officer of the watch at the time of the accident, Lieutenant Demons, and presently this gentleman found himself served with a summons. The families of the victims had brought an action against him and against Hassan Bey, the captain of the Turkish ship. The charge was manslaughter and both prisoners were taken to Stamboul to be tried in the Turkish Criminal Court. M. Demons felt this to be an injustice. Why should he, a French citizen, be tried in a Turkish court? His objections, however, were overruled, and at the end of the hearing he found himself convicted and sentenced to a fine and imprisonment. He appealed against this and was temporarily released on bail.

In the meantime the French Government had decided to stand by M. Demons and after an exchange of messages between France and Turkey the

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two countries agreed to take the case to the World Court.

It is possible that M. Demons and the band of indignant friends who doubtless rallied to his side had never heard of the World Court before the day on which it was proposed to try his case there. Whether he then sought to find out what it was, and whether he went in person to the public gallery to follow his fate, the story of the case does not tell us, but we will relate what might have been his discovery and his experience supposing he had done both these things.

The World Court was set up by the League of Nations in 1921. This was in obedience to Article XIV of the Covenant which declares that a Permanent Court of International Justice is to be established. It was decided that there should be a small group of judges, chosen for their ability and not for their nationality and elected every nine years by the Council and the Assembly. This unique law court was to settle legal questions between countries. Individual men and women could not bring cases against each other here: only a government could ask for judgment against another government. Its work is different from the Council of the League. To the Council there have come since 1920 some twenty-five disputes between one nation and another. But they have been disputes for the most part of a political nature. The World Court has been appealed to in over forty<sup>1</sup> disputes but they have all been of a

<sup>1</sup>This includes some twenty-five 'advisory opinions' when the Court's expert advice on some legal point has been asked by the Council or the Assembly. In the remaining cases the Court has delivered judgment between two (or more) disputing countries.

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legal nature, either about the meaning of a treaty or about the application of International Law. There is, of course, a body of International Law growing up with the common consent of civilized countries, but this needs interpreting just as much as the law of any single nation. The World Court settles the legal perplexities of governments in their dealings with each other and although, compared with frontier outbreaks and invasions, these seem relatively unimportant they are the kind of things which, if unresolved, aggravate bad feeling or, when there is a state of tension already existing, contribute just that final small incentive which provokes violence. Very many international disputes have legal foregrounds and political backgrounds.

Fortunately there was a dignified building all ready to house the new institution. Some years before the War some of the great nations had already seen the need for an international court and had tried to set one up. They called it the Court of Arbitration, but it never really became effective because the nations could not agree as to how to elect the judges. Every nation wanted to have a judge and that in the end would have meant about sixty judges—which is obviously too cumbersome a Bench. However, Mr. Andrew Carnegie, believing the Court would eventually get going, built for it at the Hague in Holland a 'Peace Palace' which, if not beautiful to every modern eye, used as we are to severe styles of architecture, is at least impressive. Various governments presented it with gifts of furniture and decoration, in the same way as they afterwards gave presents to the I.L.O., and the stage was

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all ready for the new play in 1914 when the Great War broke out. In the days that followed some unknown person put up on the closed iron gates, which were Germany's handsome present, the following notice: 'This house is to let.'

In 1922 the gates were opened again and in August 1927 M. Demons, as we have supposed, passed through them to hear the case of which he was the hero. A year had elapsed since the midnight collision in the Ægean for much had first to be done. According to practice the two countries concerned had each submitted their case and then their counter-case to the other. It now remained for the eminent French lawyer chosen by France to have an oral argument with the eminent Turkish lawyer chosen by Turkey.

This duly happened during five August days, in the great judgment hall of the Palace of Peace before twelve of the world's most eminent judges, the light of summer dimly entering the chamber through the stained-glass windows presented by Great Britain. M. Demons could not have failed to be impressed.

When the hearing was ended each judge, armed with a pile of documents, retired to his private room in the Palace to work out his own decision. This took some days. Then the decisions had to be circulated among the judges, but anonymously. Thus each could follow the arguments and conclusions that had been made by his colleagues simultaneously with his own.

The President of the Court (he is chosen every three years) then draws up a list of points that have



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to be decided. Again the Court solemnly meets. One by one the points are taken and discussed, and put to the vote. Then two judges are elected to assist the President in drawing up the judgment. When drafted this is presented to the full court as a Bill is presented to Parliament. Amendments are discussed and finally a vote is taken. Then comes the final meeting of the Court to deliver the judgment. In the case of *M. Demons* it was given on September 7. The judges were divided. Six had decided in favour of France and six in favour of Turkey. The president, M. Huber, a Swiss, then gave the casting vote in favour of Turkey.

Unfortunately, those who record these cases are only interested in their legal aspects; it has, therefore, been impossible to discover whether *M. Demons* had then to travel back to Constantinople and enter a Turkish prison. Perhaps his imprisonment was transmuted into an additional fine.

One of the fears that troubled pessimistic minds when the Court was first instituted was that a judge would always favour his own nation should she come before the Court. Partly to offset this it was decided from the beginning that if a country coming before the Court found no one of her own nationality on the Bench, then she should appoint one of her own judges to assist for the duration of the case. In this instance, therefore, the twelfth judge was a temporary member of the Court and a Turk.

So brief an account does scant justice to a part of the League machinery which seems to have won universal approval, nor is the case above described altogether representative. It proved a particularly

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difficult one and the judges were much more divided in their opinions than has usually been the case. Sometimes, the judgment has been unanimous.

For Further Reading—see end of next chapter.

## CHAPTER III INTERNATIONAL DISPUTES

(continued)

### *III. China and Japan*

THE two preceding stories illustrate the way in which the League peace machinery can be made to work in ordinary and relatively simple disputes. Latterly there has occurred a dispute of a far different order. To misunderstand it is to misunderstand the League. It seems worth while therefore to describe this in some detail.

On an afternoon in Geneva in September 1931 the public places in the Glass Room are all occupied and standing room is closely packed. Everyone is waiting for the sixty-fifth session of the League Council to begin. Besides those private interested spectators who faithfully follow the League's progress and besides those indomitable tourists who always succeed in acquiring a ticket when something sensational is afoot, there are present to-day many distinguished people. For the last fortnight the 13th Assembly has been in session at the other side of Geneva. In the chief seats here are many of the delegates. The newspapers which some people hold in their hands explain the crowded room and the atmosphere of expectation. A brief press despatch this morning announced that Japanese soldiers had captured and were now occupying Mukden, the capital of Manchuria.

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To the better informed among the audience this news is as grave as it is sudden. They recall how someone named Manchuria 'the Balkans of Asia' and the prophecy that it would be the scene of the next world war. Some perhaps have travelled through this rich but largely undeveloped Chinese territory lying just beyond the Great Wall. These remember the South Manchurian Railway owned and managed by a Japanese company in a narrow strip of land leased to Japan and jealously guarded by Japanese soldiers. It runs to Mukden, and in Mukden and other cities of Manchuria there has been for a long time bitter feeling between the Chinese and Japanese. Those who have travelled in the East realize how different are these two races who are so often thought to be alike by Western peoples. Similarly in the Great War the people of the East thought the French, the Germans, and the English to be peoples of identical temperaments having a family quarrel.

The Council members are here. There are the representatives of the five Great Powers, including M. Yoshizawa from Japan. The remaining nine men represent the elected Member-States. A few days ago the Assembly, in choosing these, made two changes—China and Panama. China is represented by M. Alfred Sze. The two protagonists are therefore already present.

The Council has a long agenda before it, but everyone has lost interest in the agenda. The question in everybody's mind is: Will Japan or China bring the Mukden affair before the League?

The suspense ends when M. Yoshizawa is seen to rise in his place. He speaks in English, but with

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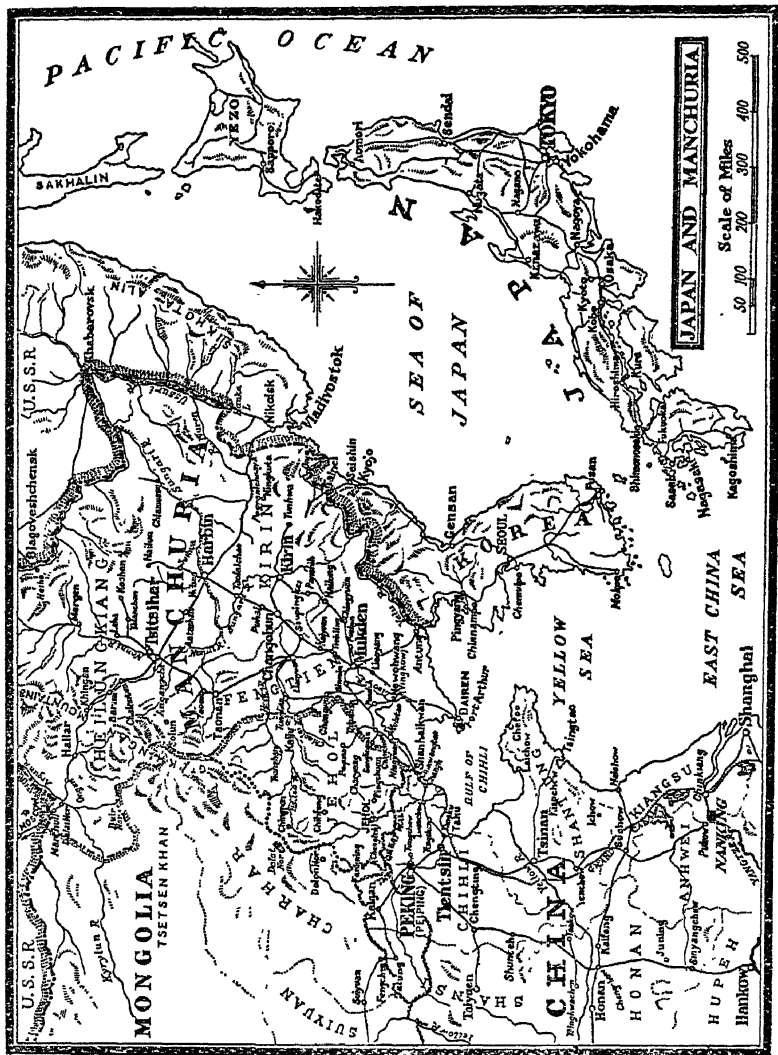
difficulty. All ears are strained to hear him. He says that an incident occurred on the previous evening near Mukden and he is anxious to pass on to the Council immediately such information as he has, although it contains few details. A collision has occurred between Chinese and Japanese troops near the South Manchurian Railway, but the Japanese government has taken all possible measures to prevent the incident leading to 'undesirable complications.'

M. Sze then rises to say how greatly disturbed he is by the news. His information does not suggest that the incident has been occasioned by any act on the part of the Chinese. He will not fail to keep the Council informed of any further news.

The President on behalf of the Council hopes that the question will be promptly settled. Then he names the next item on the agenda.

Perhaps some curious tourists expected that M. Yoshizawa and M. Sze would break at once into excited recrimination. Perhaps some journalists hungry for news, are dissatisfied. But there are others, who are like the makers of a machine watching whether it will work, and for the moment they are content. This dangerous incident on the other side of the world has been officially reported to the League a few hours after it occurred. That is the first step if the League is to function. Nothing more can be done in Geneva until more information arrives. The crowd disperses and people are saying that maybe the test for the League has come. It is thirteen years since the Great War ended and in the eleven years since the founding of the League over

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twenty international disputes have been settled by the Council. But apart from the Corfu incident in 1923, when the League was but newly formed, there has so far been no serious quarrel involving a Great Power. Now it seems a dispute is likely to be staged between one of the recognized Great Powers and a country that might also claim that same status but for the fact that she is still struggling with the disorder left by civil war. Or is the affair merely a local incident and a false alarm?

The next meeting of the Council made it quite clear that the alarm was serious.

It was a special meeting called at the request of the Chinese delegate who formally appealed to the Council in the following words:

I am instructed by the National Government of China to bring to your attention the facts stated below, and to request that, in virtue of Article Eleven<sup>1</sup> of the Covenant of the League of Nations, you forthwith summon a meeting of the Council of the League in order that it may take such action as it may deem wise and effectual so that the peace of nations may be safeguarded.

The facts referred to were alleged acts of violence by Japanese soldiers against Chinese who, according to the Chinese version, neither provoked the attack nor retaliated.

M. Yoshizawa in his reply pointed out that, as Japan understood the facts, the trouble had begun with the destruction of part of the Japanese railway by Chinese troops and that the number of wounded and dead among the Japanese contradicted the

<sup>1</sup> See Covenant, Appendix I.

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Chinese claim that there had been no retaliation. He drew attention to the enormous economic interests of Japan in Manchuria, interests guaranteed by numerous treaties between China and Japan, but not, he contended, respected by the Chinese. The argument continued for nearly three hours, and was taken up again each time the Council met. The Chinese stood for the withdrawal of Japanese troops to the railway zone where they belonged before any negotiations took place and this view had sympathetic support from the Council. The Japanese said that immediate withdrawal would endanger the lives of the thousands of Japanese civilians in Manchuria, so fierce was the anti-Japanese feeling fomented there. The Chinese undertook to guarantee the safety of these civilians. The Japanese would not accept the guarantee.

The Japanese contended that for a long time past China had not observed her treaties concerning Manchuria. China said she would take this question to the World Court once evacuation was accomplished. The Japanese urged that the interests at stake for his country were enormous, that Japan had brought peace and prosperity to Manchuria by her industries there and by her use of the land leased to her, but that the Chinese by boycotting Japanese goods and by their inability to control brigandry were destroying these good things. The Chinese retorted that the boycott was provoked by the Japanese military attack and that the so-called brigands were largely Chinese troops captured and disarmed and let loose into the countryside by Japanese soldiery.



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Both speakers produced evidence of the violence of the troops on the other side.

Finally the Council, holding the opinion that the outbreak was the result of local discontent and did not represent an aggressive policy of the Government of Japan, decided to adjourn for a fortnight after passing a unanimous resolution (in which both China and Japan voted) calling on both sides to make for peace and deciding that Japan should withdraw her troops to within the railway zone.

But at the request of China the Council met a day earlier than had been arranged. The Japanese instead of withdrawing had advanced. Moreover, Japanese aeroplanes had flown over Chinchow whither Chang Hsueh Liang, the Governor of Manchuria, had fled, and they had dropped provocative pamphlets beginning thus:

‘Chang Hsueh Liang, that most rapacious wanton, stinking youth, is still failing to realize his odiousness and has established a Provisional Mukden Government at Chinchow to plot intrigues in the territories which are safely under the rule of the troops of the Great Japanese Empire, when the heart of the Manchurian mass is no longer with him.’

They had also dropped bombs.

The long Council meetings and the protracted contradictions were resumed.

Japan now maintained that she could not withdraw her troops until certain ‘fundamental principles’ were settled between herself and China. She did not see fit to explain what these were to the

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Council, but later they were proclaimed from Tokyo. There were five of them and the fifth ran:

Respect for the treaty rights of Japan in Manchuria.

There were a great number of these treaties and some of them, known as the 'Fifteen Points,' were signed by China in 1915 under threat of war from Japan. China at that time had been completely disrupted by civil war and she had no alternative but to accept the demands made of her. But she contended that what she had been made to promise under duress, when she had no government that could exercise any authority, she need not necessarily now fulfil.

The Council framed another resolution by which Japan was invited to withdraw her troops before November 16 (i.e., in three weeks' time). Japan replied with an amendment; but no one except Japan voted for the amendment and so the original motion was carried with one dissident.

In the meantime, something of significance had happened in League procedure. The United States, having from the outset heartily endorsed everything the Council had done, now sent a representative to sit with the other Council members to share their deliberations, although, of course, not to vote. If there had been another question that had caused as much previous speculation as: How would the League work if a Great Power was involved in a dispute? it was: Would America back the League in a crisis? People felt that when Mr. <sup>s</sup>Prentiss Gilbert, the American Consul at Geneva appeared at the Council table there was a dramatic answer to this question.

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The Council members went back to their ordinary political occupations and Japan did not accept the Council's invitation to evacuate her troops. It was the Chinese forces that withdrew before the Japanese advance, and Japan began to set up what has been called a 'puppet government' in Manchuria. Later this government adopted for the country the name of Manchukuo.

On November 17 the Council reassembled, this time in Paris, to hear China appeal for help in what she claimed was 'a life and death struggle' and Japan declared that she was determined not to withdraw her armies until a new treaty re-affirming all old ones had been settled between herself and China.

The Council continued to meet for three weeks. Then another resolution was passed, this time containing a new plan—that a neutral Commission should go to Manchuria to examine the causes of the dispute. The Chinese delegate had suggested this from the beginning, but now it came as a definite proposal from Japan.

Before the Commission had gone far on its way, an outbreak was reported in Shanghai where anti-Japanese feeling had been running high. Japanese priests were attacked and a Chinese factory burned. Japan landed marines and was soon shelling the Chinese quarter. There was some stiff fighting and the resistance of the Chinese troops who were thought to be without much morale or discipline surprised the world and heartened China. The League Council asked the neutral consuls in Shanghai to send reports of what happened and

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with the help of the consuls acting as conciliators on the spot while the Council (and presently the Assembly) demanded from Geneva that both sides should withdraw, fighting at length ceased and an armistice was signed between China and Japan in three separate hospitals, the Chinese Foreign Minister being incapacitated by the physical violence of some of his own over-zealous young compatriots, and the two Japanese representatives suffering from bombing operations.

But meanwhile the trouble in Manchuria continued and China first appealed to the Council for help under new Articles of the Covenant—numbers 10 and 15,<sup>1</sup> and then finally appealed to the Assembly. This meant that a special Assembly Session had to be called.

The World Disarmament Conference was now meeting in Geneva and so delegates could be conveniently transferred from this to the Assembly. But the convenience was ironical and the depression that hung over the disarmament deliberations was certainly largely occasioned by Japan's apparent abandonment of League principle.

The Japanese and Chinese delegates now repeated their recriminations before a larger audience. When they had said their say delegates from more than thirty countries expressed opinions on the dispute and either openly or by implication declared Japan to be the aggressor. The Consular reports from Shanghai had little to say in defence of Japanese action there. She had broken her pledges under the Covenant, the Kellogg Pact<sup>2</sup> and the Nine Power

<sup>1</sup>See Covenant, Appendix I.

<sup>2</sup>See Appendix II,

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Treaty.<sup>1</sup> A resolution was adopted unanimously (apart from the disputing countries) reaffirming all the Council had said, pointing out that it was against the spirit of the League for a country to try to force a settlement by military pressure and appointing a Committee of Nineteen to seek for a just settlement.

By this time the Council's Commission of Enquiry into the Sino-Japanese dispute, more familiarly known by its briefer title, the Lytton Commission, had arrived at Shanghai by way of Tokyo. There were five Commissioners: an Italian count, a French general, an American general, a German doctor, and the Englishman, Lord Lytton, who was elected chairman. There were also a Chinese and a Japanese attached as 'assessors' and a number of secretaries and interpreters. People who read insignificant newspaper paragraphs reporting that the Commission had dined in Tokyo with the Emperor of Japan, had been received in China by the head of the government, or had now arrived in Mukden, perhaps rarely reflected that here was a strange new event—a company of seven private persons from seven different countries, each one the product of different traditions and talking a different language, travelling together over thousands of miles to examine a quarrel between two great countries, and doing this at the request of the organized world. But the fact that these dissimilar people went out on this mission was less surprising than that their report, presently offered to the world, was unanimous.

It is not possible to over-praise this document.

<sup>1</sup>See Glossary.

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It disproves the general belief that what is official must be dull reading.

The account, for instance, of the Japanese *coup* is more graphic than any newspaper report of the incident.

. . . 'And so the stage was set for the events which followed. On the morning of Saturday, September 19, the population of Mukden woke to find their city in the hands of Japanese troops. During the night sounds of firing had been heard, but there was nothing unusual in this; it had been a nightly experience throughout the week, as the Japanese had been carrying out night manoeuvres involving vigorous rifle and machine-gun firing. . . .

'According to the Japanese version Lieutenant Kawamoto, with six men under his command, was on patrol duty on the night of September 18, practising defence exercises along the track of the South Manchuria Railway to the north of Mukden. They were proceeding southwards in the direction of Mukden. The night was dark but clear and the field of vision was not wide. When they reached a point at which a small road crosses the line, they heard the noise of a loud explosion a little way behind them. They turned and ran back, and after going about 200 yards they discovered that a portion of one of the rails on the down track had been blown out. The explosion took place at the point of junction of two rails; the end of each rail had been cleanly severed, creating a gap in the line, of thirty-one inches. On arrival at the site of the explosion, the patrol was fired upon from the fields on the east side of the line. Lieutenant Kawamoto immediately ordered his men to deploy and return fire. . . .

'At this moment the south-bound train from Changchun was heard approaching. Fearing that the train

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might be wrecked when it reached the damaged line, the Japanese patrol interrupted their engagement and placed detonators on the line in the hope of warning the train in time. The train, however, proceeded at full speed. When it reached the site of the explosion it was seen to sway and heel over to one side, but it recovered and passed on without stopping. As the train was due at Mukden at 10.30 p.m. where it arrived punctually, it must have been about 10 o'clock p.m. according to Lieutenant Kawamoto, when he first heard the explosion.'

Then follows an account of how, having telephoned for reinforcements, the Japanese attacked and captured the Chinese barracks, 250 yards away, and then how other Japanese troops at 2.15 a.m. scaled the walls of Mukden. The following are extracts from the Chinese story:

'According to the Chinese version, the Japanese attack on the barracks (Pertaying) was entirely unprovoked and came as a complete surprise. On the night of September 18, all the soldiers of the 7th Brigade, numbering about 10,000 were in the North Barracks. As instructions had been received from Marshal Chang Hsueh Liang on September 6 that special care was to be taken to avoid any clash with the Japanese troops in the tense state of feeling existing at the time, the sentries at the walls of the barracks were only armed with dummy rifles. For the same reason, the West gate in the mud wall surrounding the camp which gave access to the railway had been closed. The Japanese had been carrying out night manoeuvres around the barracks on the nights of September 14, 15, 16 and 17.

'At 7 p.m. on the 18th, they were manoeuvring at a village called Wen Kuantun. At 9 p.m. Officer Liu

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reported that a train composed of three or four coaches, but without the usual type of locomotive, had stopped there. At 10 p.m. the sound of a loud explosion was heard, immediately followed by rifle fire. This was reported over the telephone by the Chief of Staff to the Commanding Officer, General Wang I-Cheh, who was at his private house situated near the railway, about six or seven miles from the barracks, to the south. While the Chief of Staff was still at the telephone, news was brought to him that the Japanese were attacking the barracks and that two sentries had been wounded. At about 11 o'clock p.m., a general attack on the S.W. corner of the barracks began, and at 11.30 p.m. the Japanese had effected an entry through a hole in the wall. As soon as the attack began, the Chief of Staff gave orders for the lights to be extinguished and again reported to General Wang I-Cheh by telephone. The latter replied that no resistance was to be offered. Distant artillery fire was heard at 10.30 o'clock p.m. from the south-west and north-west. At midnight live shells began to fall inside the barracks. On reaching the south gate, the retreating troops of the 621st Regiment found that the Japanese were attacking that gate and that the guard was withdrawing. They accordingly took shelter in some trenches and earth-works until after the Japanese soldiers had passed through into the interior, when they were able to make their escape. . . .'

The Commission's own version of the story of that night, reached after consultation with various neutral persons is expressed in the following quotations:

'Tense feeling undoubtedly existed between the Japanese and Chinese military forces. The Japanese . . . had a carefully prepared plan to meet the case of



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possible hostilities. . . . On the night of September 18-19 this plan was put into operation with swiftness and precision. The Chinese . . . had no plan of attacking the Japanese troops. . . . They made no concerted or authorized attack on the Japanese forces and were surprised by the Japanese attack and subsequent operations. An explosion undoubtedly occurred on or near the railroad between 10 and 10.30 p.m. on September 18, but the damage, if any, to the railroad did not in fact prevent the punctual arrival of the south-bound train from Changchun, and was not in itself sufficient to justify military action.'

Then comes the Commissioners' own verdict:

'The military operations of the Japanese troops during the night, which have been described above, cannot be regarded as measures of legitimate self-defence. In saying this the Commission does not exclude the hypothesis that the officers on the spot may have thought they were acting in self-defence.'

The passages just quoted occur after fifty pages in which all that in bygone years has led up to the events of that night is carefully and fairly described. The Report shows how, when China was seemingly indifferent about Manchuria, Japan and Russia struggled for power over it; but how during the struggle the millions of unpolitical, poverty-stricken Chinese farmers who gradually migrated to this land of grain, themselves established the fact that the land was Chinese.<sup>1</sup> 'This immigration was in fact an occupation—peaceful, inconspicuous, but none the less real.' But the assistance given to these people

<sup>1</sup>The Report gives the population of Manchuria as 30,000,000, of whom it estimates 28,000,000 are Chinese.

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by Japanese capital and trade is clearly affirmed. 'Without Japan's activity, Manchuria could not have attracted and absorbed such a large population.'

The peculiar concessions which Japan has secured from China and which, among other things, enable her to administer the railway zone as if it were a section of Japan itself are faithfully explained. 'There is probably,' says the report, 'nowhere in the world an exact parallel to this situation, no example of a country enjoying in the territory of a neighbouring state such extensive economic and administrative privileges. A situation of this kind could possibly be maintained without leading to incessant complications and disputes if it were freely desired or accepted on both sides. . . . But, in the absence of those conditions, it could only lead to friction and conflict.' Here, surely, the Report touches the very heart of this present quarrel.

Other matters of paramount importance receive the same fair attention. The disorganized state of China is described and while it is shown that this largely arises from the Chinese habit of thinking in terms of family or province rather than of country, it is shown that the provincial governors do not openly repudiate the National Government and that it is energetically seeking to modernize and pacify the country. It is also made clear how exceptionally tantalizing to the Japanese is the lack of an authoritative government in China and China's vague and hesitating attitude about Japan's numerous 'treaty rights,' as is also the anti-Japanese boycott. This last, which is part of the anti-foreign movement that is animating young China (and is largely to be

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explained by the long history of extra territoriality in China) is a definitely organized boycott carried on by boycott associations and winked at by the Chinese Government. The following extract will show how it works:

'During the hostilities in Shanghai, and the months immediately following the evacuation of the Japanese troops, the boycott although never completely abandoned, was moderated, and during late spring and early summer it even looked as if Japanese trade in different parts of the country might resume. Then, quite suddenly at the end of July and beginning of August, coinciding with the reported military activity on the borders of Jehol, there was a marked revival of the boycott movement. Articles urging the people not to buy Japanese goods appeared anew in the Chinese Press, the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce published a letter suggesting the resumption of the boycott, and the Coal Merchants' Guild in the same city decided to restrict to the minimum the importation of Japanese coal. At the same time, more violent methods were employed, such as the throwing of a bomb into the compound of a coal dealer suspected of having handled Japanese coal, and the sending of letters to store-keepers threatening to destroy their property unless they stopped selling Japanese commodities. Some of the letters reproduced in the newspapers were signed the "Blood-and-Iron Group"—or the "Blood-and-Soul Group for the Punishment of Traitors" . . . The various boycott movements, and the present one in particular, have seriously affected Sino-Japanese relations, both in a material and in a psychological sense.'

A whole chapter of the Report is given up to an examination of the new state of Manchukuo which

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the Japanese declare has been brought about by the will of the people of Manchuria. The Commissioners experienced a little difficulty in collecting their data on this subject since the Japanese officials showed anxiety to protect them from bandits or ill-wishers.

‘There were no doubt occasional real dangers in the unsettled conditions of the country, and we are grateful for the efficient protection with which we were provided throughout our tour. But the effect of the police measures adopted was to keep away witnesses; and many Chinese were frankly afraid of even meeting members of our staff. . . . Interviews were therefore usually arranged with considerable difficulty and in secrecy.’

The letters received by the Commission numbered 1,550 and all but two ‘were bitterly hostile to the new “Manchukuo Government” and to the Japanese.’ The fact that the Report always puts the name of the new state in inverted commas is delicately significant and anticipates its verdict: ‘We have come to the conclusion that there is no general Chinese support for the “Manchukuo Government” which is regarded by the local Chinese as an instrument of the Japanese.’ Before turning to the future the Report warns its readers that the issues of this conflict are not at all simple. They are, on the contrary, exceedingly complicated, and only an intimate knowledge of the facts, as well as of their historical background, should entitle anyone to express a definite opinion upon them.

The Commissioners conclude with their recommendations to the League. First, a mere restoration of the old order of things—the *status quo ante*—

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would be no good, and an acceptance of 'Manchukuo' would be equally unsatisfactory. Manchuria should belong to China; nevertheless the Commission considers it is not unreasonable of Japan to demand a stable government in a country which is of tremendous economic importance to her. Good trade relations between China and Japan would add greatly to the prosperity of both countries. The Commissioners sympathize, too, with Japan's anxiety for her own security; nevertheless they question whether an expensive military occupation of Manchuria is really in Japan's own interests. Moreover, other countries must not be forgotten and the solution of the problem must not contradict any treaties. Finally, if the principles of the Covenant and Pact of Paris are not upheld in this case they will diminish in value. The solution, therefore, should be one from which both China and Japan benefit and which does not override any agreements which these two countries have made with the rest of the world. A new form of self-government should be constituted in Manchuria, but one under the Chinese regime. Some machinery should be set up for settling at once any minor disagreements that may rise between China and Japan and since the disorder in China causes misgiving to Japan and an anxiety to the rest of the world, she should be given international help in setting her house in order.

If China and Japan agree to discuss these suggestions the Commission thinks that an Advisory Conference might be called. To this would come a Chinese, a Japanese (representing their respective governments) and two groups of people from

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Manchuria, one selected in a way that China approves and one selected according to the desires of Japan. The Conference would try to work out an agreement and might refer any points it could not agree on to the League Council. The concluding settlement should be:

- (1) A Declaration by China setting up a new self-governing administration in Manchuria.
- (2) A treaty between China and Japan dealing with Japan's interests.
- (3) A treaty between the two countries by which they would agree to settle future differences amicably and support each other against attack.
- (4) A commercial treaty between them (dealing among other things with the boycott).

The Report was duly presented to the Chinese and Japanese Governments and to the League Council. Japan then asked that the meeting of the Council to consider the Report should be delayed some weeks while her government framed its comments. This request was granted, although there was an opinion abroad that Japan was playing for time in the hope that Manchukuo would consolidate itself. A special envoy from Japan brought that country's opinions from Tokyo and on a day when Geneva was darkened by a thick November fog the Council met in the Glass Room to hear comments from both sides.

Japan flatly opposed the Report. She wished to settle her difference with China by herself. Manchukuo has now been recognized by the Japanese Government and it must stay.

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China, while objecting to some things in the report, had for the most part high praise for it. But she made a wholesale condemnation of Japanese aggressive policy from the sixteenth century onward. The bitter recrimination continued for some days.

Meanwhile in Tokyo and Nanking news from Geneva was awaited with tremendous excitement and special editions of newspapers reported events. The long speeches delivered by the two opposed Orientals at the Council table were of course not intended for the Council alone. They were especially directed at the crowd of journalists who filled some hundreds of seats below the dais. In the room given up to the use of journalists in the Secretariat piles of literature were placed by either country. In this war of propaganda there was one day a successful capture of ammunition when a few journalists from one of the two disputing countries crossed the room to where were lying piles of fat books stating the case for the other country. The journalists each took half a dozen of these freely proffered copies, and thus they were all disposed of.

The President of the Council pointed out that since China had some months ago appealed to the Assembly the Report must now be considered by that body. Mr. Matsuoka objected for Japan. This was too big and difficult a question for a decision to be imposed on either party, which was the Assembly method since a sheer majority vote holds good there. However, this objection could not prevent the question going forward and so early in December an extraordinary session of the Assembly was called.

Once more then delegates from nearly the whole

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world considered China's appeal. But this time there was new evidence before them: they had the Report of their own commission.

Mr. Matsuoka, a great orator, held the delegates closely attentive while he expounded Japan's disagreement with the Lytton Commission. He claimed that Japan acted in self-defence, and that her operations in Manchuria were the only way of establishing peace and order in the East. Peace and order in Manchuria were vital for Japan, depending as she did on the food supplies and raw materials and markets of that country. Nor did Mr. Matsuoka agree with those who accused Japan of having broken the League Covenant and the Kellogg Pact. China, he declared, is 'in a state of chaos' and the rules of the Covenant cannot apply to her. Japan stood by Manchukuo and would never consent to abandon it.

But Mr. Matsuoka's arguments and eloquence did not move the Assembly. The general feeling was that the League Covenant must be upheld. Especially did the smaller countries feel this for, if the promises of nations were meaningless what protection could be expected against an aggressor? Many speakers took up Japan's argument that she had acted in self-defence. They quoted the Lytton Report, they argued that if Japan's activities in Manchuria were accepted as self-defence all peace-keeping machinery would be useless, and as for her intention that she was maintaining law and order, 'order,' said Señor Madariaga of Spain, 'does not mean bayonets and men in uniforms, it means the respect and maintenance of the law.'



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The Assembly went home for Christmas leaving a Committee of Nineteen to try all the resources of conciliation between Japan and the League.

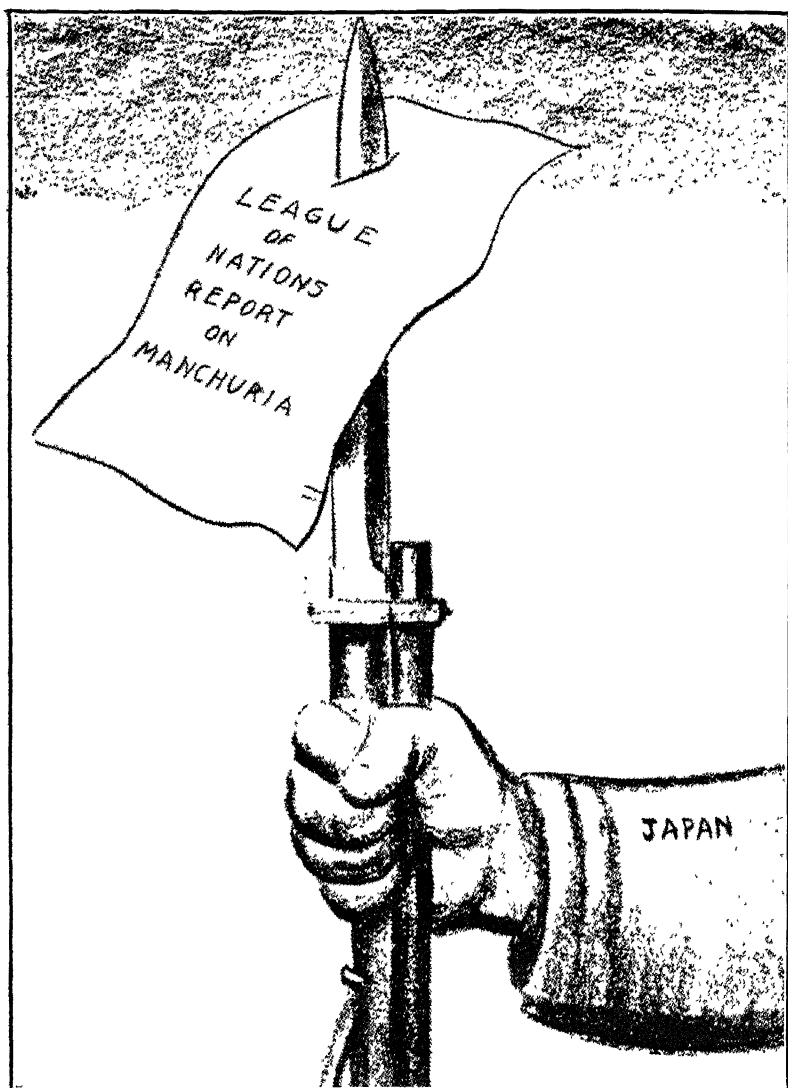
The Nineteen met often in private and its chairman together with the Secretary-General personally approached the Japanese delegates. The Nineteen wanted to set up a conciliating body to settle the whole question along the lines of the Lytton Report, and since the United States and Soviet Russia were both interested in Manchuria, it suggested that they should take part. Japan, however, strongly opposed these non-member states being invited to collaborate. Very well then, the Nineteen would put aside that suggestion. Would Japan then agree?

Mr. Matsuoka temporized. He awaited new proposals from Tokyo. When they at last came they amounted to a renewal of Japan's former contention that there could be no question of interfering with Manchukuo.

The Nineteen were therefore compelled to report to the full Assembly that conciliation had failed. Acting in accordance with Article 15, paragraph 4, of the Covenant they drew up a report on the whole situation. This pronouncement which the full Assembly was to be asked to accept would, if agreed on, be the League's final verdict. It may be summarized as follows:

The League accepts the findings of the Lytton Commission; it recognizes that Manchuria belongs to China and should enjoy self-government under China's sovereignty; it considers that the severance of Manchuria from China would be dangerous to peace; it believes that the dispute between Japan





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Cartoon by Fitzpatrick in the *Post-Dispatch*, St. Louis.

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and China could be and should be peacefully settled; it admits that there are real grievances on both sides; it recognizes the boycott of Japanese goods in China as a source of irritation; it finds China in a state of transition and in need of international help for the future development of her country; it declares that it cannot regard Japan's operations in Manchuria as acts of self-defence and is convinced that the government of Manchukuo rests in the hands of Japanese officials. It reminds Japan that in the first days of the dispute she pledged herself to withdraw her troops; it points to Articles 10 and 12 of the Covenant, by which League members have promised to respect each other's territorial integrity and to submit any dangerous dispute to peaceful settlement. It is of the opinion that before the taking of Mukden responsibility for the tension between China and Japan rested on both countries and that either of them could and should have brought their grievances to the League; but as for what had happened since September 18, 1931, that can in no way be considered the responsibility of China. It recommends that Japan should withdraw her soldiers and that, as advised by the Lytton Report, Manchuria should be helped to set up a form of self-government acceptable to her people, under Chinese sovereignty, giving due protection to the economic interests of Japan.

The Report was communicated to the world by means of the League's own wireless station, recently established. The transmission took ten hours. The broadcast made a great impression on America.

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Up to the day in which the full Assembly met to vote on this report it was hoped that Japan might make some gesture of agreement. If she did not, her withdrawal from the League seemed inevitable. Politicians in Japan realized this. Except for the army and the Nationalists (who had visions of Japan as mistress of Asia) opinion there looked on Japan's withdrawal with regret. But her government was determined not to move from its two main contentions: that it had acted from self-defence and that Manchukuo was unalterable.

On February 24, 1933, the Assembly met. Delegations were asked to say 'Yes' or 'No' to the Report. Siam refrained from voting. In response to the roll-call Japan said 'No.' Every other country said 'Yes.' Then in a tense silence Mr. Matsuoka walked up the hall to the rostrum and announced that his government were forced to conclude that they and the League could not agree and that Japan's efforts at co-operating with the League had reached their limit. Then he went back to his seat, picked up his papers, and, while his speech was being translated into French, he walked out followed by the rest of the Japanese delegation.

In the meantime, and, in fact, precisely while the League's verdict was being drawn up and delivered, the Japanese army began adding the province of Jehol to the state of Manchukuo. Winter with its freezing of the soil favoured the movements of the Japanese troops, but the intense cold added to the ordinary miseries of warfare. The wounded usually died before they could be medically treated and on one occasion the Japanese found 350 Chinese volun-

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teers frozen to death after they had been besieged. The Japanese acquired this new territory, equal in size to England and Wales, chiefly by means of air raids. In a few weeks some 900 civilians were killed by bombs.

The dramatic exodus of the Japanese delegation from the Assembly was accompanied by the resignation of Japanese officials at the Secretariat and on March 27 there came from Tokyo Japan's formal resignation from the League. According to the Covenant this had to be in the form of a two-years' notice of withdrawal. Thus for two years Japan will not have technically become a non-member and could resume her membership within that time without all the formalities of a new election. Her seat at the Council table and her places in the Assembly are meanwhile unoccupied. In sending in her notice of resignation Japan declared that her zeal for peace was equal to the League's.

Having delivered its verdict, and received the agreement of America, the Assembly added two other members to the Committee of Nineteen<sup>1</sup> and set this Committee of Twenty-one the task of seeking how the Assembly report could be put into force. League members meanwhile are pledged to working in unison and it is understood that none of them will recognize Manchukuo. Japan is thus the only country in the world that has any relations with the new state.

So after seventeen months ends the first act of this drama. And now we must try, like a chorus, to add appropriate comment, for the story as told so

<sup>1</sup>U.S.A. and Russia—but Russia was unwilling to serve.

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far is bewildering to those who looked to the League to make peace in the Far East.

In the first place it must be realized that this is in several different ways a peculiar dispute. It is unusual for one country to own and protect with her soldiers a strip of territory running right through another. Again the condition of China, in her state of transition, with a central government that has uncertain authority is, happily for the world, not a normal condition for a great country. And finally the rupture when it came about was extraordinary in that neither side declared war on the other. As the British delegate on the Council once remarked, there has been war in everything but in name; nevertheless, the fact that the Japanese did not declare war and maintained that they were only taking protective measures for the safety of their own people and of their commercial interests, made the quarrel in its early stages seem less significant than it really was. The twelve Council members who listened to their Chinese and Japanese colleagues when the matter first came up were in some perplexity. Manchuria was at the other side of the world from Geneva. The disputing Orientals were of a different race and outlook from the European and American statesmen who sat listening to them. Although the Chinese spoke English fluently the Japanese was neither happy in his English nor his French. Often the deliberations were held up because in spite of the much-talked-of 'shrinking world' it took a long time to get the information they wanted from Tokyo and Nanking. Then, although the Chinese delegate showed anxiety and brought daily

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communiqués about the activities of Japanese soldiers in Manchuria, messages from Japan were full of assurances that the affair was indeed merely local and that Japan had no designs whatever on Manchuria. She repeated that she was guarding her own people, that her soldiers had been forced to leave the railway zone for this purpose and would go back as soon as this could be done without risk. The Council was inclined to respect the word of a Great Power; Japan had been one of the permanent Council members since the League was founded; she had been earnest in the cause of peace. Naturally, the Council hesitated to condemn her over uncertain events thousands of miles away.

How far Japan had meant from the beginning to annex Manchuria history will decide. It looks as if this was not the policy of the Tokyo government when the outbreak occurred. It may have been the dream of the army leaders in Manchuria; but then the Japanese army is not under the Japanese Government. It is under the authority of a War Minister who is only responsible to the Emperor and it is therefore to some extent a power unto itself. It looked as if the Japanese Government at first did wish to limit the activities of its soldiers in Manchuria, but afterwards acquiesced in a policy of conquest. This of course would be hotly recommended by the ardent young Japanese Nationalists.

What is beyond dispute is the absolute dependence of Japan on her trade with Manchuria. And in this connection it is important to remember that the British Empire and the United States have shut out Japanese emigrants from their territories—the



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British Empire by a 'Gentlemen's Agreement' and the United States by an Aliens Act. The reason, in both cases, was that the Japanese labourer with his lower standard of living would unfairly compete with the white man. Nevertheless, the Japanese resented the American act which classes them with negroes and the 'Gentlemen's Agreement,' in spite of its genteel title, was also a source of resentment when they thought of the vast tracts of uninhabited territory in Australia. The Japanese nation, speedily as it has developed, seems yet to have joined the other Great Powers a little too late for the realization of its ambitions and for the easy satisfaction of its real needs. The other powers have already appropriated all spare territory; they have adopted a standard of life to which Japan cannot yet rise; and now, having put behind them their sins of exploitation and imperialism, they shake their fingers at Japan. We can understand, therefore, the feelings of the Japanese delegate who compared Japan to the woman brought to Christ as having been taken in adultery, and the other powers to the Pharisees to whom Christ said:

'He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.'

(But he did not, as someone pointed out, add Christ's final words: 'Go, and sin no more.')

Japan's predicament is not without tragedy. In her extreme need she has followed the earlier example of the countries who now condemn her. Nevertheless, this does not justify her conquest of Manchuria, for she had agreed, by joining the League, to respect the territory of other nations and to bring her

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disputes to the Council, or to arbitration or to the World Court. Similarly in signing the Kellogg Pact she had renounced war as a means of achieving her ambitions and in signing the Nine Power Treaty she had expressly promised not to interfere with China during that country's period of internal reconstruction. That she acted under extreme provocation cannot excuse her in her violation of these 'sacred promises.' Had she not been provoked she would not have acted thus. Nor would any Great Power. It is just these urgent and unusual situations that the Treaties guard against. Otherwise what would be the need of these among Great Powers? From the foregoing story of the League's handling of the dispute it is clear that this is now the unanimous verdict of the League, and Japanese action in Manchuria stands condemned by the organized world.

There arises the question why did not the League censure Japan sooner? Granted that the Council was at first reluctant to distrust the good intentions of one of its chief members, there must have come a time in the first few months of the dispute when the Council realized that the Covenant was being flouted. If the Council had acted decisively then Manchukuo might never have been set up. Under Article 11, which was the Article invoked by China, the League may take any action 'to safeguard the peace of nations.' This seems to offer opportunity for something other than peaceful persuasion which was the only action adopted. The withdrawal of ambassadors from Tokyo, the threat of an economic boycott, and other sanctions mentioned in Article 16 might

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have stopped short the activities of the Japanese army in Manchuria. Why did none of these things happen?

The answer seems simply to be that there was no will to do these things except among the smaller countries to whom the working of the peace machinery is of vital interest, since therein lies their own defence. Various causes made the governments of the Great Powers unwilling to take drastic action—and it must be remembered that the men who sat on the Council could not act as authoritative persons—they were bound by their governments. Firstly, it seemed impolitic to put Japan in the position of having to resign from the League; secondly, any drastic measures once undertaken would have had to be carried through to the end and that might have meant war on Japan; thirdly, there was no absolute certainty that all the League could be persuaded to act in concert; fourthly, the dispute coincided with a world economic crisis and a period of moral as well as material depression; fifthly, there was no real public opinion in favour of international action against Japan. The point of view of the ordinary man seems to have been that the League ought to settle the question, but it was nothing to do with him or his country—and this irresponsible and unintelligent point of view was favoured by the popular Press, which instead of enlightening the man in the street, merely whipped up his blind prejudices, exploited his fears, and teased his emotions.

Some people may say that the League would have been pre-judging the case had it brought pressure

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on Japan before its Commission, which was like a jury listening to evidence, had pronounced the verdict. What would be thought, they ask, of anyone who sought to punish a criminal, before his case had been tried? That would be lynch law. Should the League countenance lynch law?

This argument ignores the part played by the police in individual crime. The accused is not allowed to continue his practices unhindered until judgment is given. He is either detained in a police cell or released by the police on bail. But the League has no police force. The Commission was appointed in December 1931. It did not set sail for the East until February 1932. Its report was completed by the end of the following summer. The Report was considered by the countries concerned and then by the Assembly—which gave judgment in February 1933. That gave Japan, the accused, some fourteen months to go on with an occupation which, according to the original charge, appeared to be criminal and was pronounced so at the end.

Because the Council did not, at an early stage in the dispute, devise some means of restraining the Japanese army in Manchuria, three results have followed: some thousands of soldiers and civilians have been killed; a government has been set up in Manchuria against the wishes of the majority of the people; the Covenant and Kellogg Pact have lost some of their dignity and significance. Of these the last is of the most importance to us, since we cannot recall the dead to life. If these so-called 'sacred promises' of nations are not to be held sacred on all occasions—we cannot go forward. Japan's defence

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that she acted in exceptional circumstances and under extreme provocation, although it rouses our sympathy, cannot prevent our censure. For here we touch on something on which all the future hangs. The 'sacred promises' are not sacred at all if they do not always hold good for all countries. Naturally, Japan only had recourse to arms under exceptional circumstances. A Great Power is not likely to-day to incur the frightful cost of war unless the circumstances are exceptional. And if the Covenant and the Kellogg Pact, subscribed to with so much ceremony and earnestness, do not hold good in the only kind of circumstances in which a nation is tempted to go to war, then they are no good to any of us.

It is natural that people who believed in the League should fall into despair, and that those who had foretold that a Great Power would never bow to the League should point out how right they were. Nevertheless it is a pity that, when the mists are blown suddenly aside and we see just how far we are advanced on the road to peace and security, we should sit down and wait for war to overtake us.

Looking forward to a world that has given up trying to settle disputes by violence we may feel that in thirteen years we have not advanced very far. But looking backward to pre-War days we find that we are well on the road. The spectacle of the organized world meeting to censure a nation for breaking its solemn treaties was unthinkable before the War. Then the Powers would have taken sides or anxiously declared their neutrality, each country acting entirely in her own interests.

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If we are to push forward to that security where we can feel assured that the civilized world will not fight over its quarrels any more, we must insist that sacred pacts are sacred pacts and that there can be no dishonour to a nation so heavy as the dishonour of trying to avoid them. And this means yielding something of our national sovereignty. There is no getting away from that. You cannot believe in peace and at the same time believe that your country is always her own judge as to what she shall do. That haughty and heady independence we must see for what it is—a value long outgrown, suitable to a savage tribe that fights for pleasure. A country that joins the League forgoes this ancient right of self-decision.

A League member should find more honour and dignity in offering her complaints for a just settlement than in throwing away a whole generation of youth in an attempt to force her will.

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## CHAPTER IV

### THE STRUGGLE FOR DISARMAMENT

**W**HAT are armaments? Why is the world attempting to reduce and limit them? Why has so little been achieved? By answering these questions we shall try to arrive at some understanding of what is probably the most urgent problem of our time.

What are armaments? Most people will perhaps think first of guns and battleships, and then of tanks and fighting aeroplanes. But in considering the problem of disarmament it is important to bear in mind all the time the fact that armaments include everything with which a nation might fight—not only the weapons but the men who use them, and not only the more obvious armaments like the khaki-clad soldier and the cruiser, but also the War Office staff, chemical compounds in laboratories, and powers of censorship and propaganda. The more one reflects the wider does the category of armaments become, for if the word truly signifies all that a nation might use for fighting purposes, are we not all potential conscripts and are not all factories potential armament firms? Experience of the World War has taught us that a nation fights no longer only with its professional fighting services but with all its resources. All advanced nations have plans in readiness for turning themselves into fighting machines and on the outbreak of war the



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most peaceful industries may find their purposes curiously deflected—chemical fertilizers being replaced by high explosives, typewriters by rifles and machine guns, ladies' underwear by gas masks.

Side by side with this nation-wide organization we can also look forward to a variety of deadly weapons undreamed of even fifty years ago, so that the picture of war is something far more distressing than the scenes from South Africa and the Crimea that still hang in old fashioned parlours. Indeed, a faithful representation of a modern battle would be too obscene for any sitting room.

It appears that by the time the Great War ended the nations engaged in it were just beginning to master this technique of civilized warfare. The adjective is ironical, but it is nevertheless accurate, for it is by applying the discoveries of our scientific civilization to the business of fighting that the world has transformed the nature of warfare. When the Great War ended it had cost Great Britain alone in direct payment ten thousand million pounds, over one million lives and nearly two million casualties. She was then paying at the rate of £8,000,000 and an average of over six hundred lives per day. The other countries were making similar contributions. But the competition in destruction did not cease with the Armistice in 1918 or with the proclamation of peace in the following year. Every country has been improving her weapons since then, particularly the newest weapons of aerial bombing and poison gas. We are assured that the air raids suffered by London, Paris, and Berlin not so many years ago were child's play compared with

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what could be done now. For instance nearly 300 tons of bombs were dropped on London between 1915 and 1918, but this amount we are told could easily be disposed of in every twenty-four hours under modern improvements. Moreover, it has been claimed that the bombing aeroplanes would not necessarily be controlled by human pilots who, it is said, are the weak link in the plans for an aerial bombardment, since they are apt to be deterred by the vigour of the enemy's defending machines. Nowadays a fleet of bombing aeroplanes can be sent out with neither pilots nor passengers and their operations directed by wireless from a distance<sup>1</sup>. If they are brought down they may, as a result of the impact with the ground, do more horrible damage round about than they would if left to finish their work from the air. The bombs might be explosive or of the new incendiary type which weigh only 1 kilogramme and have only to strike a hard substance to develop a heat so intense that each eventually becomes a glowing mass able to eat its way through steel. No extinguishing appliance for these has yet been discovered.

There is some controversy as to whether bombs or gas are the more deadly of the newer weapons, but it seems an unprofitable argument since preparations have been made by most countries to use both. There has been tremendous experimentation with the possibilities of gas warfare. Most people have probably heard of the famous Lewisite gas or 'Death Dew.' It was not used during the War

<sup>1</sup>See *What would be the Character of a New War*, section on 'The Mechanization of Warfare,' by Major-General Fuller.

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although it was being manufactured in great quantities for an attack in 1919. When three small drops were applied to a rat it died within two hours.<sup>1</sup> There is also phosgene which produces an effect described by the British soldier as 'dry land drowning' because the victim slowly drowns from the blood which fills his lungs. Other chemical combinations bring other forms of suffocation, burning, and convulsions leading to immediate death or to chronic degeneration of the brain. Lord Halsbury, Chief of the Explosives Department of the British War Office during the Great War recently expressed the following opinion on the relative effectiveness of gas and explosive bombs: 'Compared with high explosive bombs, modern gas bombs dropped on a town would be incomparably more deadly. If even the biggest of high explosive bombs was dropped, say, on Piccadilly Circus, the most it would do would be to demolish a large building such as the Criterion, and to kill, say, fifty people. But one single bomb filled with modern asphyxiant gas would kill everybody in an area from Regent's Park to the Thames.'<sup>2</sup>

Chemical Warfare Committees for controlling and subsidizing research in their national chemical industries exist in Great Britain, France, Italy, Poland, Japan, and U.S.A. This last country has developed the largest poison gas arsenal in the world at Edgewood, Maryland, where 1,400 tons of poison gases are kept in stock. Great Britain has a Government chemical warfare experimental

<sup>1</sup>Gillian: *The Menace of Chemical Warfare*.

<sup>2</sup>*The Times*, January 2, 1933.

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station at Porton, near Salisbury, where the products of the Government factory at Sutton Oak, in Lancashire, are tried on various animals, including apes, goats, cats, rabbits, guinea-pigs and a few horses. The annual cost of the factory and the experimental station has until recently been rather more than Great Britain's contribution to the League of Nations.<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of the Edgewood and Porton stations and all other such has been thus described by a German Staff officer in his contribution to *What would be the Character of a New War?*:

The aim of war chemical laboratories all over the world is the same: to produce a gas that is odourless, invisible, obtainable from the raw material in the country itself, unsusceptible to weather conditions, easily stocked, will penetrate any mask, and of which the smallest possible quantity can saturate the largest possible space.

Before leaving the question as to what are armaments it is necessary to pay some attention to the invisible weapons which a nation speedily collects as soon as it finds itself in a state of war. It has been truly said: 'When war is declared, truth is the first casualty.' No modern war can be undertaken unless the nation is united in a passionate desire to defeat the enemy. Reasons for this defeat must therefore be constantly given. This is done by a rigorous censorship which suppresses publication of any news to his credit and by positive propaganda

<sup>1</sup>This was the case in 1930-1931 when the respective figures were £126,300 and £120,000. Now the economy practised by the government and the decreased value of the pound makes the League contribution considerably more than the other.

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against him. Thus during the Great War the Germans were vilified by all the British newspapers for four years, and in the German Press the English, French, and Belgians received similar treatment. Atrocities were liberally produced on either side. The Germans were said to boil down their dead bodies for fat<sup>1</sup> and to cut off the hands of Belgian babies, and this information was supported by reliable authority. The Allies were said to have adopted the practice of putting out their prisoners' eyes; indeed a collection of eyes had been seen by a German boy—and again the source of information was most reliable. Each side could show a shocking contrast between its war aims and those of the other side. Germany said she was fighting for her very life and that England's ambition 'for years had been turned to surround us with a ring of enemies in order to strangle us.'<sup>2</sup> Great Britain's repeated cry was that she fought 'a war to end war' and a war 'to make the world safe for democracy.'

Deliberate mistranslation was an easy and frequent form of calumny. In England the German song *Deutschland Über Alles* was everywhere quoted as expressing Germany's intention of ruling the whole world, whereas the real meaning of the line *Deutschland über Alles auf der ganzen Welt* merely expresses devotion to Germany above all other countries. Similarly the following line from the Personal Column of *The Times* (July 9th, 1915):

Jack F.G.—If you are not in Khaki by the 20th I shall cut you dead.—Ethel M.

<sup>1</sup>The origin of this was some use made of the carcases of horses.

<sup>2</sup>Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria in October, 1914.

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was translated into German by the *Cologne Gazette* in such a way that the meaning became:

If you are not in Khaki by the 20th I will hack you to death (*hacke ich dich zu Tode*).

But what perhaps seems most sinister from the standpoint of later years is the official dispensation with honesty. The British War Office issued a circular to all officers at the front inviting reports on incidents which, it was stated, need not be strictly accurate so long as they were inherently probable. Similarly an official in the German Presse Konferenz said:

It is not so much the accuracy of the news as its effect that matters.

In all countries the propaganda was purposely introduced into schools and willingly supported by people of moral rectitude and intellectual distinction. Indeed, it is difficult now to realize how universal was this simple credulity—clergymen, statesmen, and scholars being among the most believing.

With the coming of peace we awoke as from a dream and truth began to reassert itself. Sir Philip Gibbs re-writing some of his War news (*Realities of War*) says in one passage:

At the close of day the Germans acted with chivalry, which I was not allowed to tell at the time.

Another War journalist recently confessed to an American audience that in order to provide copy for an insistent editor he had entirely fabricated a story of a Belgian baby and its timely rescue from the Germans—with the result that he was embarrassed with 5,000 offers of adoption and consign-

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ments of baby clothes, until he declared the baby dead of an infectious disease.

Some of the faked photographs of those days have also been explained and it is interesting to learn of a Viennese firm which provided atrocity photographs with blanks for the headings, so that these might be filled in at the convenience of either side.

In concluding an answer that has been necessarily a long one, mention may be made of a weapon that has more interest as a curiosity of war than because of its deadly effect—the propaganda disseminated among the enemy and among the inhabitants of occupied territory. In Great Britain this implement of war was directed by Lord Northcliffe and other eminent journalists. It chiefly took the form of leaflets automatically distributed by large paper balloons from behind the British lines. The balloons were loaded according to the direction of the wind. If it blew towards the enemy trenches they carried information in German calculated to break the *morale* of the German soldiers, if towards Belgium, they were given a load of comforting news for Flemish housewives.

We have now to consider the question: Why is the world attempting to limit and reduce armaments?

The answer to this is usually given under the headings comprising moral, economic, and political reasons.

If we may venture to begin with the moral reason it is hardly necessary to point out that modern weapons being, as we have seen, so widely efficacious and in many instances so remarkably cruel, it is

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incumbent on mankind to consider the possibility of abandoning some of them. But this is not the only moral reason. The countries that fought on the Allied side in the Great War are pledged to disarmament.

When Germany was forced to accept the Treaty of Versailles in 1919 she had to agree to give up all armaments beyond what were considered necessary for her self-defence and the maintenance of internal order. With this end in view specified weapons (such as tanks, heavy artillery, military aircraft, submarines, and poison gas) were forbidden to her absolutely, others were definitely limited—for instance, her army must not exceed 100,000 men and the numbers of her battleships and cruisers were determined. The clauses in the Treaty which made these stipulations were preceded by the following preamble:

In order to render possible the initiation of a general limitation of the armaments of all nations, Germany undertakes to observe the military, naval, and air clauses which follow.

When the German delegation declared that they agreed with armament reductions, providing that these were the beginning of a general reduction, they were told that 'Germany must consent unconditionally to disarm in advance of the Allied and Associated Powers,' but the representatives of these powers, nevertheless, added that the German reductions were to be looked on as a first step and that the League of Nations (set up by another part of the same treaty) would make general disarmament one of its first duties, since this was one of the most 'fruitful preventives of war.' There was a similar



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understanding when the Treaties of St. Germain, Neuilly-sur-Seine, and Trianon were signed with Austria, Bulgaria, and Hungary, respectively.

By Article 8 of the Covenant of the League of Nations all the members of the League—that is practically all the world except the United States and Russia—have agreed that plans shall be made for the general reduction of armaments, that when made and adopted they shall be strictly observed, that members shall exchange full and frank information on the subject, and that the evils arising from the manufacture of arms by private firms shall be prevented. Most members of the League signed the Covenant in 1919. In 1925 at the signing of the Locarno Treaties, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, and Poland made the following declaration:

They undertake to give their sincere co-operation to the work relating to disarmament already undertaken by the League of Nations, and to seek the realization thereof in a general agreement.

Finally the World Disarmament Conference of 1932 at the close of its first session on July 23rd pledged itself to frame a General Convention which should prescribe 'a substantial reduction of world armaments,' declared it would fix limits to land armaments, to naval weapons, and to military aircraft and that it would forbid bombing from the air and all 'chemical, bacteriological and incendiary warfare.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>This pledge since it is only in the form of a resolution agreed upon by the majority of delegates to the World Conference can, strictly speaking, only be regarded as binding the particular delegates at Geneva who adopted it, whereas the other pledges represent the most solemn agreement between nations.

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The economic reasons for disarmament are fairly widely appreciated just now by an impoverished world in which every country is struggling to make its expenditure match its revenue. We shall therefore treat very briefly of an argument that is weighty with the burden of taxation and the numbers of unemployed.

To say that the world spends a thousand million pounds a year on armaments is merely to confuse our minds with an unintelligible figure. The all-important fact is that this is more than before the Great War and that it is spent on far more effective means of destruction. Except for War Debts it is the largest item in each country's budget and far outweighs their expenditure on Education, Public Health, and other Social Services. And what, after all, are War Debts, but the unpaid bills for armaments in the past? The burden of present armaments for Great Britain costs her people £200 a minute. If we add the War Debt to this the sum becomes £1,000 a minute—which is more than half the country's total expenditure.

There remain the political reasons for disarmament.

It was urged, even before the Great War, that the competition between nations to outdo each other in their preparations for war was in itself a cause of war, since it bred suspicion and mistrust. When Lord Grey, who had been the British Foreign Secretary at the outbreak of the Great War, declared in his recently published memoirs:

The enormous growth of armaments in Europe, the sense of insecurity and fear caused by them—it was these that made war inevitable.

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MARS ASKS FOR £200 A MINUTE FROM BRITISH TAX-PAYERS.  
Cartoon in the *Glasgow Bulletin*.

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here was an official corroboration of this theory from one who should know. We have seen that the Allies in presenting the Peace Treaty to Germany declared themselves to be of the same mind. Indeed, this is now the accepted view and the old saying 'If you want peace prepare for war' is no longer held to be true in a world largely composed of independent and equally developed countries—although when pronounced sixteen hundred years ago by a Roman writer<sup>1</sup> in a much smaller barbarian world subject to Caesar, it may have, quite likely, appeared as an unnecessary platitude. To abandon all armaments is a proposition that responsible statesmen can hardly be expected to contemplate yet, but there are some who look for a world that has agreed to pool its weapons for the defence of any country that is the victim of aggression. Obviously this would make substantial reductions possible all round, and one of the latest political fantasies is of a world where a Permanent Armaments Commission has to watch for defaulting countries who are reluctant to equip themselves with their pledged minimum.

Anyone seriously reflecting on the foregoing reasons for disarmament would surely ask if anything has been done to remove this incubus which both empties our pockets and threatens our lives, and which we have all agreed to remove—but we know that little has been done as yet.

Or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that, except for a small measure of naval limitation at the Washington and London Conferences in

<sup>1</sup>Vegetius in *De Re Militari*.

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1922 and 1931, nothing concrete has yet been achieved. This leads us to inquire the reason.

Those unfamiliar with the history of the League of Nations since its first Assembly in 1920 might easily suppose that disarmament, which was to be one of the League's first duties, had been shelved. But that is not true. The Council, at almost its first meeting, set up a committee of soldiers, sailors, and airmen to make suggestions<sup>1</sup> and when these experts turned out to be insufficiently helpful the First Assembly set up a new committee<sup>2</sup> of more varied composition. In the first four years of its existence the League made two attempts at arranging guarantees among its members as a prelude to a disarmament conference.<sup>3</sup> Both failed. In 1925 the Locarno Treaties were successfully negotiated. There were two immediate and happy results: Germany joined the League and the Council set up the necessary preparatory committee for a World Conference.<sup>4</sup> This committee has bristled with international differences for six years, but by 1931 it was able to present the Council with a Draft Convention. This provided for the limitation and reduction of every kind of armament, leaving blanks for the figures which the World Conference must fill in. In the meantime three Conferences of the naval powers had been held, two (as we have seen) with some small success, one with none.<sup>5</sup> In February

<sup>1</sup>Permanent Advisory Commission.

<sup>2</sup>Temporary Mixed Commission.

<sup>3</sup>The Draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance and the Protocol.

<sup>4</sup>The Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference.

<sup>5</sup>The Coolidge Conference.

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1931 the World Disarmament Conference finally met at Geneva where a special building had been erected to accommodate it. As many of the newspapers remarked at the time the very fact of its meeting was a very considerable triumph. It was an event unprecedented in the history of the world when delegations from fifty-eight countries<sup>1</sup> (many of them headed by ministers of state) met together for the purpose of arranging a disarmament treaty.

But the story of all this seemingly abortive effort only underlines the question that we are trying to answer—why so little actual achievement?

There is first of all the technical difficulty; but we shall dismiss this briefly as not fundamental. It has cost hours of time and volumes of statistics, but these, as we shall see presently, are like the remonstrances of a person who has set himself an uncongenial task. It obviously puts a tremendous strain on human ingenuity when military budgets expressed in dollars have to be compared with those in pounds (and even pounds fluctuating uncertainly, unmoored to a Gold Standard) when the equivalent of one country's capital ships has to be expressed in another country's cruisers, when the potential military power of a nation with conscription has to be measured against a country with no compulsory military training but a much more considerable navy. Similarly it has been found difficult to differentiate between aggressive and defensive weapons. Yet if there was a will to disarm the way through these technicalities would surely be found.

<sup>1</sup>The only absentees were: Ecuador, Haiti, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Salvador, Dominican Republic.

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A much more formidable obstacle is the self-interest of armament firms. It is important to remember that most of the armaments of the world have not been made in Government factories but by private firms. Obviously these companies are threatened with serious loss if the 'substantial reduction of armaments' resolved upon by the World Conference is successfully accomplished. In the first place many workers would lose their employment. This price would of course be paid by the employees of Government factories also. But economists have shown that the dislocation would only be temporary since the savings resulting from a reduction in this costly expenditure would (through decrease in taxation) have a beneficial effect on more worthy industries. It is generally agreed, moreover, that until unemployed armament workers are re-absorbed they must be assisted by the state.

But there seems to be no opposition from the workers. On the contrary, the working people of the world have been united in their cry for disarmament. The opponents to disarmament are the directors and shareholders of the armament firms, particularly those in France, Great Britain, and the United States.

A special sub-committee, appointed by the Temporary Mixed Commission, set up to examine this problem reported that armament firms fomented war scares, attempted to influence their governments, disseminated false reports, sought to influence public opinion by getting control of newspapers, formed international trusts which increased

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the price of armaments, and urged on international competition. All this goes to prove that the 'grave objections' to the private manufacture of armaments mentioned in Article 8 of the Covenant were well founded.

The anxiety felt by the armament firms is illustrated by the story of Mr. Shearer. This gentleman was sent to Geneva by the three largest shipbuilding corporations of America as an 'observer' of the Naval Conference held at Geneva in 1927. His duties were, briefly, to do all he could to wreck the Conference. The Conference failed and Mr. Shearer claimed the money promised him. But the companies having paid him \$51,230 refused him the \$255,655 which Mr. Shearer declared to be the balance due to him. He therefore sued the companies and the whole affair came to light.

It must not be thought that the vested interests in armaments belong to entirely unprincipled men. The most sinister difficulty lies in the fact that they are for the most part very respected persons. The directors are often retired officers or government servants and may be also directors of banks or other industrial concerns, whereas the ordinary shareholders include all kinds of professional and business men, including some of the very people who were representing their country at the World Conference. Presumably the desire for disarmament among these people must be in inverse ratio to their financial interests involved. We can appreciate the point of view of Mr. Douglas Vickers when he said, in opening a new showroom:

It is useless to expect the League of Nations to



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settle all quarrels, and a private firm making armaments is deserving of support.<sup>1</sup>

but it is not a pleasant reflection that in 1915 Australian, New Zealand, and British troops were destroyed in Anzac Cove by Vickers shells previously purchased by Turkey.<sup>2</sup>

Industrial development has always called for constant economic adjustment and if our moral and political development makes a similar demand, it merely puts the armament manufacturer at the same disadvantage as the manufacturers of horse-buses and of hansom-cabs.

Another real difficulty lies in the demand made by some countries that security shall precede disarmament.

This tangle between disarmament and security has been tackled at every successive Assembly, some countries pulling at one loose end and some at the other. Naturally the knot tends to get tighter. The two chief opponents are Great Britain and France. Great Britain says: The presence of great armaments makes the nations feel insecure; reduce the armaments and you will increase confidence. France says: Until there is a real guarantee that the nations will help one another against attack it is not safe to disarm; demonstrate security and disarmament will naturally follow.

The impasse has been the chief political cause of inaction and led to the failure of the Treaty of Mutual Assistance and the Protocol. At the very outset of the World Conference, France proclaimed

<sup>1</sup>See *Tb. Times*, May 29, 1931.

<sup>2</sup>See Hansard, March 11, 1926.

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her plan for a League of Nations fighting force to be directed from Geneva. This she claimed would give security and make disarmament possible. For her security of course chiefly means security against Germany, her historic enemy. When therefore Germany made it clear to the Conference that she was no longer content to endure the humiliations imposed on her by the Peace Treaty and that in any World Disarmament Treaty she demanded an equal status with other countries, France only pulled harder at her own point of view. Signor Grandi, the Italian delegate, thus described the result to his Senate:

This Conference has had to deal with two difficult questions: the French Question of Security and the German Question of Equality of Rights. The resulting discussion has, during the past month, brought the Conference to a dead stop. (June 3rd, 1932.)

This last obstacle is really one expression of what is the most deep-rooted difficulty of all: the world does not really want to disarm. When the Polish delegate at the World Conference asked for a sub-committee on Moral Disarmament he was accused of trying to side track the discussion; but whatever may have been his intentions he cannot be charged with irrelevance. The phrase 'Moral Disarmament' is perhaps unapt and misleading. 'Psychological Disarmament' more nearly describes that mental and spiritual change which must accompany any concrete and actual reduction of arms. The fear of one nation for another is embedded in all of us and until lately it has gone almost entirely un-

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questioned. The older history text books all over the world bear witness to it. The fact that everywhere everyone takes his own customs as the norm and regards the ways of the other countries as peculiar is further evidence. The foreigner is a joke everywhere. His unintelligible language makes us laugh, his ways of doing things provoke our criticism and he is so much, for all of us the other person, that we are all capable of the indignation expressed by the Englishman at Marseilles who said: 'But I am not a foreigner. I'm *British!*'

Some people assert that this psychological turn-about must happen before we can hope for any practical measures of disarmament. But is it not possible that both the outward and inward may begin together and give each other impetus? Thus a World Conference meets in a world most imperfectly converted to disarmament; but the tentative decisions it makes react on its subconscious will. After all it is really fear that makes us poke fun at the foreigner. That is too often forgotten by peoples who do not consciously fear any longer, people like the Scandinavians and the British. But to the French who have listened in Paris to the gunfire of an enemy not so many miles away on their own land, it is a very conscious emotion. Would not some outward success at Geneva help to allay it?

If conversion depended only on moral enlightenment we should have little cause for optimism, but while the few are finding their way to the new point of view by thinking, many more are being pushed there by their own interests. Business becomes more international every day, the arts and

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sciences take more and more advantage of the increased facilities for international communication, the ordinary person increasingly takes holidays abroad. The main trouble is that in being forced by the logic of circumstance to accept this new point of view they do not always forego the old. The resulting confusion of thought may prove to be the chief weakness in this struggle for peace; for there are an increasing number of people who cling to two incompatible points of view. They are admirably described by Señor de Madariaga in his magnificent work on disarmament:<sup>1</sup>

We bear no grudge to the out-and-out imperialist militarist. We are not where he is, but we know where he is. He believes in progress by selection. He belongs to a school of thought which is plausible and whose views deserve respect. But we consider as the pest of the present age the best-of-both-worlds individual, whether of the sheep or of the fox variety, the person who goes about feeling like Bismarck and speaking like Jesus Christ. To him we say: Get out of the way.

## FOR FURTHER READING

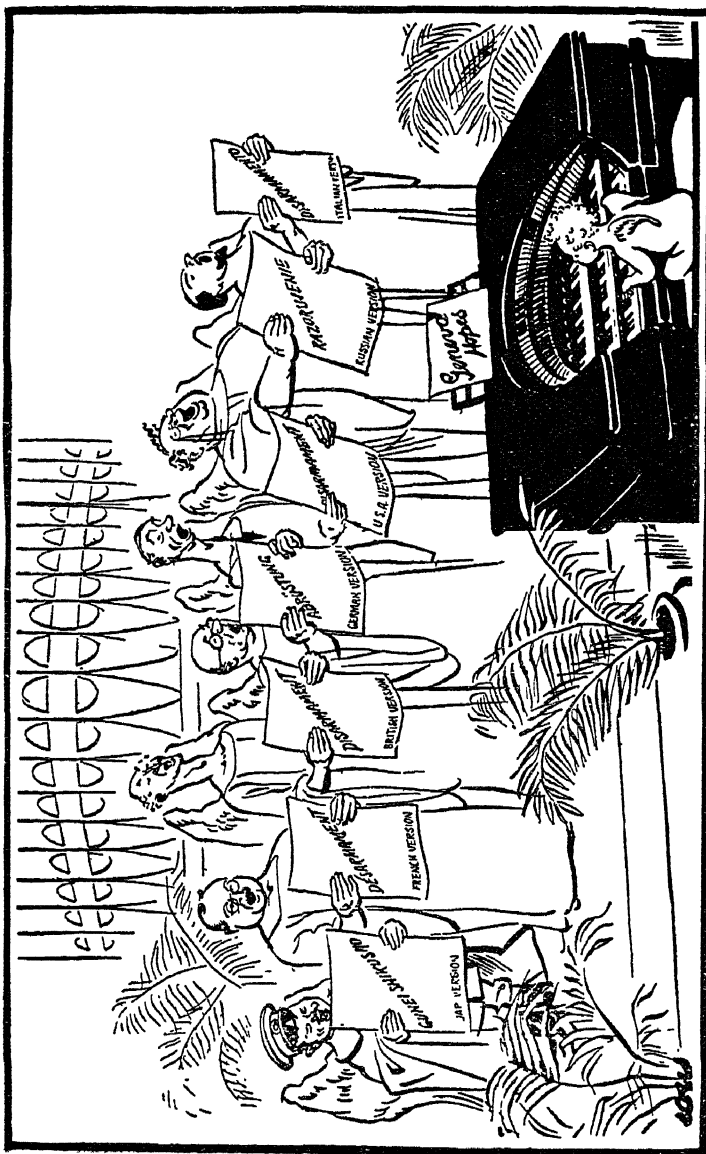
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<sup>1</sup> See books at end of chapter.

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ORGANIST: "VERY NICE, BOYS. NOW LET'S ALL TRY SINGING IT IN ONE LANGUAGE."

Cartoon by Low in the *Evening Standard*.

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## CHAPTER V

### MANDATES

**I**N the autumn of 1921 there met one morning round a table in Geneva, a Belgian, a Dutchman, an Englishman, a Frenchman, an Italian, a Jap, a Portuguese, a Spaniard and a Swede—the last being a woman. There was also a Swiss professor acting as secretary.

None of these people held government appointments in the countries from which they came. They were merely private citizens, not chosen to represent their different nationalities, but invited, on account of their personal qualifications, to undertake a piece of work which doubtless they themselves, some years before, would have called fantastic.

It is generally understood to-day that the colonial extensions of European countries have not been chiefly undertaken for the benefit of the natives. We have heard of the cruelties of the Belgian Congo, and during the War we were frequently informed that German West Africa was administered with much brutality. Even in the British Empire, we now realize that the native, even if he has not been maltreated, has not necessarily been consulted and that our energetic intrusion into his mysterious darkness was often unwelcome. We also know that if we brought him our various presentations of Christianity, our medicine and scientific skill, we

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sent with them our rifles and alcohol. In short, we are more honest than formerly. We know that Europe colonized Africa because she wanted its tropical products, that the native had somehow to be made to do the necessary work in a climate unsuited to the white race, and that his welfare was an afterthought urged upon us by missionaries or prompted by quite practical considerations.

The white conscience was stirring before the War and in the first uplift of Peace and Victory this was one of the wrongs which the Allies were going to put right. Moreover, President Wilson in his famous Fourteen Points which were the basis of the Armistice had declared that in disposing of the spoils of war the people who chanced to be the inhabitants of the spoils must be considered equally with the claims of the victors.

Thus it came about that although Germany and her allies suffered the usual consequences of defeat in losing their possessions, contrary to all previous history these lost territories were not completely parcelled out among the nations on the other side. It is true that their European losses were the gains of other European countries that sought to make good old claims, but the fate of Germany's African lands and Pacific islands and of Turkey's Arab domain was otherwise. And this is all the more surprising since the allies had made, during the War, several secret and neighbourly pacts about dividing up these winnings among themselves.

No, it was to be a peace without annexations, the ex-enemy lands were to be confiscated from these defamed countries who had proved themselves unfit



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to administer them and hereafter they should be 'a sacred trust of civilization,' administered indeed in each case by one of the victorious powers, but in the name of the League and under its supervision.

That there is a little hypocrisy in this new notion is obvious. It would be neither possible nor profitable here to examine the victor's charge of former mal-administration. It is sufficient to call to mind first, that it was still a political necessity to consider Germany and her allies transgressors, and, second, that the most notorious of colonisers, Belgium, was on the side of the righteous. With these reflections we can regard the confiscation of the possessions as the inevitable consequence of war and disregard the attempt to give the act a high moral sounding note. What is of real interest is the way in which these territories were then disposed of. Here again it is obvious that there is some equivocation. At this distance of time we can see at once that the administration of a native territory in the name of the League is a compromise and that when the arrangement was made a great many people must have hoped or feared (according to their interests or ethics) that under this graceful veil the usual naked form of annexation would be repeated. But this has not been the case.

Here it becomes necessary to examine the methods by which it was proposed to carry out this new principle of a sacred trust.

The territories were to be divided into three classes: A, B, and C. Those in class A were the Arab lands belonging to the now deceased Turkish Empire—Palestine, Syria, and Mesopotamia (or

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Iraq); inasmuch as the inhabitants of these consisted of a developed people, anxious for independence, they were to be trained immediately in the ways of self-government by the powers in whose guardianship they were temporarily placed. France had Syria, Great Britain had Palestine and Iraq. Palestine was also to provide a national home for the Jews—but more of this later. The B territories were the German colonies of tropical Africa and these were chiefly divided between France and Great Britain, although at the protest of Belgium Great Britain was persuaded to spare a small portion of her area to that country. The people of these lands were to be governed in their own interests. They were to be free to follow their consciences, to choose their own religion. They were to be guarded against slavery, against the abuses of alcohol and against trade in arms. Their territory was to maintain the open door<sup>1</sup> for trade with all members of the League. Into class C went German South-West Africa and hundreds of little islands that she formerly owned in the Pacific Ocean. These were to be absorbed into the domains of their guardians—S. Africa took the African lands, and Japan, New Zealand, and Australia shared the islands—but, again, subject to all the safeguards mentioned above.

The apportioning of the mandates was done by the victors in the war. After this the League of Nations stepped in.

To see that the principle of trustee-ship is carried out in the prescribed way a Permanent Commission of experienced persons, holding no government

<sup>1</sup>See Glossary.

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positions and mostly coming from disinterested countries, was to be instituted. To this body the guardian countries were to present annual reports and to send responsible officials who would be catechised as to their country's dealings with the peoples entrusted to their care.<sup>1</sup>

This, in brief, is the mandate system. Its novelty lies in the arrangement by which an undeveloped country is put in the care of a more advanced one. It is an arrangement with which we are all familiar as between individual people. There we speak of guardian and ward. The clumsy expressions mandatory power and mandated state signify the same relationship between nations. The word mandate is a solemn word for charge or trustee-ship. Thus to say that one country has the mandate for another is as different from saying it owns it, as a guardian's relationship to his ward is as different from that of a slave owner to his slave.

Thus it is anyhow on paper. We have now to see how it has worked out in practice.

It is obvious that the success of the system is going to depend chiefly on the people who form the Permanent Mandates Commission. And this brings us back to the small international gathering encountered at the opening of the chapter.

In following the minutes of the first Session of this Commission one feels that these nine people are far from confident. They seem to be groping their way to something unfamiliar. They are not a body of idealists. They are mostly men of experience in colonial administration and they are not all entirely

<sup>1</sup>See Article 22 of the Covenant.

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convinced, perhaps, of the doctrine they uphold. One, at all events, believes that taking care of the African native means making him work. 'The obligation to work should be established in the Colonies for natives,' he says. Another has forgotten whence came the African's strong drink. 'The native,' he says, 'must be defended against his natural vice, alcohol.' But these echoes of pre-War imperialism die down and the new point of view asserts itself. The most conspicuous person in the first Session is Professor Rappard who as head of the small Mandates Section at the Secretariat acts as Secretary to the Commission. It is he who shows the Commission what it has got to do and guides it through these first meetings. No official reports have come yet. Some of the mandatory powers have not yet agreed with the Council upon the terms of the Charter in which the conditions of their mandate are to be clearly laid out. By courtesy, however, some of the mandatory powers have sent reports that could not yet be officially demanded and M. Rappard suggests plunging at once into that from the French Cameroons. Then he leads the Commission in a careful investigation of this mandate, keenly alert to every paragraph that deals with the welfare of the native. He then helps the Commission draw up questionnaires which are to be sent to all B and C mandatory powers and which are to be the basis of all future reports. Herein are such questions as the following:

Does domestic or other slavery still exist? (Give statistics).

What steps have been or are being taken to secure

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the emancipation of all slaves, and the suppression of all slavery, whether domestic or otherwise?

How is the campaign against alcoholism organized?

What are the effects of these measures? (Statistics relative to the import and to the local manufacture of alcoholic liquors, etc.)

What steps are being taken in the territory to provide for public health, sanitation and to combat endemic and epidemic diseases?

At the end of an exceedingly energetic session the Chairman thanked M. Rappard to whom, he said, it was due 'that they had enjoyed such a terrible visit in the beautiful town of Geneva, where his tireless activity had not given them a single day's respite, but had supplied them every day with a newly prepared task.'

After that the Commission met regularly, at first once a year, and then as work accumulated, twice. There were a few changes in the personnel including the appointment of Professor Rappard as an ordinary member of the Commission, after his resignation from the Secretariat, and the substitution of a Norwegian headmistress for Mrs. Bugge-Wicksell, when that famous Swedish woman died. The procedure became regular and the members warmed to their task. As each report was considered there came to the table where the Commission sat 'accredited representatives' of the mandatory power to answer the Commission's searching questions. These representatives had necessarily to be people with all the information at their finger tips. The representative who answered most of the questions has usually been the chief officer from the mandated

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territory itself and he has frequently been accompanied by a member of his Colonial Office. This process of catechising has been described as a family council in which the guardian is examined on his care of his ward.

It should here be remarked that although the Commission chiefly depends on the report of the mandatory power for its information it uses all other sources of information also. From the first the Mandates Section has been in the habit of sending out every month to each member of the Commission a selection of Press articles and official papers bearing on any of the mandated territories. These as well as the petitions, suggestions, memoranda, and letters which find their way to the Commission enable it to form its judgments and frame its questions and sometimes lead it to request further information of the mandatory powers. At the end of each Session the Commission draws up a report to the Council. This is, in turn, passed on to the Assembly so that the mandatory powers may be said to be carrying on their work under fairly close observation.

The Commission has twice assembled for an extra-ordinary session. In the spring of 1926 it met to consider a revolt in Syria. For this France had to make a special report and send special representatives. All the information about the rebellion which had previously been suppressed was dragged into the light. No stone was left unturned and the report which the Commission finally presented to the Council of the League, although sympathetic for France's difficulties, was frankly severe. As well as pointing out mistakes in the administration of

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Syria the Commission expressed itself thus about the inadequacy of France's report:

The Commission regrets to record that this document does not fulfil its expectations: it contains lacunae not only in its statement of the immediate causes of the present risings, but also in regard to the deeper causes of an unrest which had in no way been brought out in the reports of preceding years.

Except for a rising in S.W. Africa a few years before (a much smaller affair) this was the first time that the Mandates Commission had had to look into a serious quarrel between a guardian and a ward. The Commissioners felt called upon to explain their duty to the world. 'Our job is twofold: first, to see that the mandate is faithfully carried out in every case; and, second, to help the mandatory governments, by every means in our power, to fulfil their new and difficult tasks'—this, in effect, was what the Commission said.

Probably it was only to avoid embarrassing France and adding still further to her difficulties that the Commission did not send some of its own members, or their representatives, to Syria, to consider the damage done by French bombs in Damascus and to hear the complaints of the mountain Arabs, the Jebel Druse, who had led the rebellion. However, before the Commission met, France had already begun to forestall some of its recommendations. She had recalled the military gentleman in charge of the mandate, a man of more courage than courtesy who had exasperated the Jebel Druse, and she had replaced him by the tactful and popular M. de Jouvenel who was already associated with the

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League of Nations. A more sympathetic administration had already begun and when the next annual report for Syria was examined by the Commission 'the Commission expressed its appreciation of the full information contained in the report. . . . It was glad to learn that the revolt had come to an end.'<sup>1</sup>

In 1930 another extra-ordinary session was called to examine Great Britain about her administration of Palestine. At previous meetings the Commission had listened to the story of the quarrel between the Arabs and Jews over the Wailing Wall. At this point a word must be said on the peculiar difficulties of this mandate. One of the promises made by Great Britain during the War was that when Palestine had been conquered from the Turks it should not only be a self-governing country for Palestinian Arabs but thenceforth it should be also a home for the Jews. When Great Britain took over the Palestine mandate therefore she found herself, so to speak, the guardian of two very dissimilar children. There were the Moslem Arabs, picturesque, unprogressive but keenly nationalist. There were also the Jews, most of them refugees from Eastern and Central Europe, many of them full of ardour and idealism, determined to establish a Utopian home for those of their scattered race who cared to join them. The Jews who associate themselves with this cause are known as Zionists.

Another difficulty lay in the special religious importance of Jerusalem, a city where are collected the holy relics of three religions and where not only the representatives of these are jealous of their

<sup>1</sup>Monthly Summary of the League of Nations.



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rights but where within one religion there may be questions over rights of possession.

For instance, at a recent meeting of the Commission it was stated that some plaster having fallen in the Grotto of the Nativity, two nails attaching two curtains had to be displaced and then reaffixed. But one curtain belonged to the Latin and one to the Orthodox Church and 'the Latin patriarch complained that the nail used for the hanging belonging to the Latin Church was no longer in the same position.'

But this was nothing to the quarrel over the Wailing Wall.

Unfortunately this wall is both a relic of Solomon's temple and part of a holy Moslem enclosure. It belongs to the Moslems, but for centuries orthodox Jews have been accustomed to come and pray on the pavement in front of it. On holy days they would sometimes bring benches for the infirm and old, though under the Turkish regime this was forbidden. One day an officer of the British mandate found the Jews proposing to bring a screen there for the Day of Atonement. The purpose of the screen was to separate the men and women worshippers, according to the custom of the Jews. The screen was forbidden, but it nevertheless remained. The British therefore had it forcibly removed. There was an outcry in consequence. The British said that things must be at present as they had been under the Turks. The Moslems then showed the British documents by which the Turks had forbidden benches and other such appurtenances. The Jews showed the British pre-War photographs of these

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things at the Wall. The Moslems began to demonstrate their ownership by establishing a kind of chapel close to this, the most sacred Jewish spot in the world, and interrupted the devotions of the Jews with their own calls to prayer. The Jews then called upon the British to fulfil their promise and preserve the new Jewish home for the Jews. The enmity between the two peoples that had been there from the beginning became more acute, until one day the Arabs made a sudden attack on the Jews, of whom many were slaughtered.

In examining these unhappy events the Commission found that the Mandatory Power had been too passive and hesitant, displayed a lack of insight, did not take enough precautions and had failed to follow the advice of the Commission which had previously urged an increase of the defence force.

Thus we see that under this new system of dealing with countries that are not yet self-governing, the ruling authority, even when she is one of the Great Powers, must submit to the criticism of a body acting on behalf of the League. The real value of this is that it proves the trustee-ship to be a fact and not the fiction that cynics suggested. Moreover, this new idea is bound to affect the relationship of any colonising power to its own colonies. England cannot, for instance, satisfy all the requirements of the League in her mandate for Tanganyika and act quite differently towards her natives in the neighbouring colony of Kenya. This brings us within sight of a new order of things when Imperialism changes its colour.

It will be remembered that the A mandated people

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were said to be sufficiently advanced for prospective self-government. Great Britain and France are under an obligation to prepare Palestine and Syria for this and they have clearly no easy task. But in Mesopotamia, now called by its Arab name, Iraq, the obligation has not been quite so difficult to fulfil.

It is a strange coincidence that so many of the most ancient and interesting places of the world have become part of the 'sacred trust' of the League of Nations. Thus we find the Mandates Commission watching over the Holy Places of Jerusalem, concerned for the safety of mosques of Damascus, protecting those courteous and cultivated South Sea Islanders among whom Robert Louis Stevenson lived and died. But the Commission's most important act has been to recommend for freedom a country more romantic even than these. Someone has described the territory between the Tigris and the Euphrates as 'one of the most barren and god-forsaken stretches of land which the earth possesses,' and all travellers there complain of the naked desolation, the heat, and the sandstorms. But here Nebuchadnezzar reigned in ancient Babylon; here, according to Genesis, Abraham, sitting at his tent, beheld three angels; here—so the legend goes—on the muddy banks of the Euphrates, Noah caulked his Ark; and in the south, where the rivers meet and pomegranates grow, it is supposed that Adam and Eve enjoyed their Paradise.

To-day the country is chiefly populated by Arabs and in Baghdad, the capital, where Haroun Al-Raschid used to prowl, disguised, at night, an Arab sheikh, King Feisul by name, has his palace. His

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religion and that of most of his people is the Moslem faith and the country has some famous Moslem shrines. Across the desolate flat lands, caravans of pilgrims often come to worship at the tomb of Hussein, son of Ali, the Prophet's son-in-law, and to the same place there also sometimes come strings of camels bearing a melancholy load of corpses from Persia so that these Moslem bodies may rest in sacred soil. The supposed tomb of Jonah is also a Moslem shrine and archaeologists are not allowed to dig about this holy mound for the remains of Nineveh that lie beneath.

In 1922 Great Britain, having invited King Feisul to reign and having organized elections and set up ministries, made a treaty with the Government which she had herself created, promising freedom. In 1926 the British High Commissioner<sup>1</sup> stood before the table of the Permanent Mandates Commission and delivered himself of a sermon on the upbringing of politically backward nations. He pointed out that in the nurseries of to-day children are not surrounded with the care and protection that was formerly considered necessary, but are taught to 'learn by experience.' So, he said, it should be in the upbringing of a nation. And this, he explained, was the method adopted with the Iraqi. The British had set up Iraqi ministers, each shadowed by a British adviser who was to act as an intelligent nurse. Only in matters concerning the very life of the country, that is to say in finance and foreign policy, did the Mandatory Power exercise authority. Professor Rappard moved by the High

<sup>1</sup>Not to be confused with the members of the Mandates Commission.

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Commissioner's eloquence, made another analogy. He said that Iraq was like a tree with its roots firmly fixed to earth, but its boughs free to wave in the wind.

The annual reports of Iraq were full of optimism and the Commission had few criticisms to make, although Madame Bugge-Wicksell was troubled that so many of the boys in the new Iraqi secondary schools failed in their examinations.

In 1930 the Assistant Commissioner for Iraq coming to represent the Mandatory Power before the Mandates Commission, rather startled the members by his proposals that Iraq should have her freedom after two more years. The Commission pointed out that the Report did not demonstrate the readiness of the Iraqis for self-government and wanted some proofs of this. The British Assistant Commissioner explained the situation by an analogy, as his predecessor at that table had done. The nursery infant had now become a schoolboy. The Assistant Commissioner said that Great Britain, in her relation to Iraq, was like a schoolmaster entering his pupil for a scholarship in two years' time. The teacher could not demonstrate that the boy was ready for the examination now, but he was promising and he was developing, and the schoolmaster felt justified therefore in entering his name. The Permanent Mandates Commission remained a little apprehensive.

In August 1931 Great Britain sent to the Commission a complete survey of the development of Iraq in the eleven years in which she had been under her care. On the basis of this she claimed that her

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ward could now be allowed to manage his own affairs.

The Commission was sceptical. They were also embarrassed. They felt that if they agreed to Iraq's independence and thereafter the country relapsed into confusion, they themselves and the whole mandatory principle would meet the criticism and derision of the world. Great Britain, however, said that she took all responsibility for the result, whatever that might be, and the Commission sent to the Council of the League a recommendation that, on this understanding, the new country should emerge. The Council accepted the recommendation and it then only remained for the Assembly to admit Iraq to membership of the League, for that was part of the bargain.

A new member is voted for in public, so on the morning of October 3, 1932, the president of the 13th Ordinary Assembly caused a roll call of the Member States to be taken. As the usher shouted each country's name the chief delegate called back his answer. In every case the vote was 'Yes,' sometimes given in English, sometimes in French. Meanwhile the Iraqi delegates headed by their prime minister had arrived in Geneva. On the conclusion of the voting they entered the *Bâtiment Electoral* amid the applause of the Assembly and the click of cameras. Then followed an interchange of congratulations. The Greek foreign minister as president of the Assembly pronounced a welcome and Nowry Pasha el Said, Iraq's prime minister replied. Iraq was complimented on achieving her independence and Great Britain was complimented

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on giving it. King George V cabled his congratulations to King Feisul who from Baghdad sent his thanks to Buckingham Palace.

Behind the scenes various opinions were expressed as to the merits of this now historic act. People who had considered Iraq an expensive ward were glad for economy's sake. People interested in oil feared that their commercial interests would not now be so safe. Those who knew the rivalry between the two great Moslem sects in Iraq prophesied quarrels between the Sunnis and the Shiah. Those who were concerned for one or other of the minorities in Iraq, the Christians, the Armenians, the Jews, feared that in spite of promises and safeguards, these would suffer; and as for that formidable minority the Kurds, it was said that they would now come down from the hills and devastate the people of the plains.

Also, while Sir John Simon at the Assembly was bowing to the congratulations of his fellow delegates a section of the Press was questioning some of the methods by which Great Britain had brought order to the wilder parts of the country. It was pointed out that the usual method of establishing authority over rebellious sheikhs had been to bomb their villages from the air. It is true that this had not been without warning, the object being not to destroy life but to damage property and make living unpleasant. However, everyone did not obey the Arabic handbills dropped from the aeroplanes before the bombs, nor attend to the loudspeaker that urged people from their homes—and there were casualties.

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It must not be thought that every British official, soldier, and R.A.F. man has been withdrawn from Iraq. By the terms of the treaty Great Britain is still to give advice and lend some defence.

Everyone is waiting to see how the new Arab Kingdom will manage. Will she continue to grant facilities to oil companies who want to develop her natural resources, and other facilities to Persian pilgrims who want to bury their dead in her sacred soil? Will she finish the roads begun by the British and complete the telephone service between the Tigris and the Mediterranean? Will she tolerate the self-laceration practised in public on holy days by extreme Moslem devotees? Will she keep the Kurds at peace in the mountains and develop a system of public health in the cities? Will she respect the rights of her clamouring minorities, develop her schools, avoid bribery and corruption, deal justice without favour and snatch sufficient prosperity from her cotton and oil and dates and liquorice? Is it possible that she can plant a new Arab civilization in the dust of Nineveh and Babylon?

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## CHAPTER VI

### FIGHTING DISEASE

TO show what the League is doing for the health of humanity and how it is doing it, is a very difficult task. It seems best to imitate the method of the cinema and present a series of pictures; but the reader is warned that it will oblige him to make a succession of rapid passages through time and space.

A Saturday afternoon in Geneva in the August of 1922. Along by the lake the Genevois and visitors from the hotels make a crowd under the lime trees and on the pleasure steamers. In a room in the Secretariat ten men and one woman sit round a table. They are clearly of different nationalities and when the woman speaks she is recognizable as a citizen of the United States.

This is the Health Committee of the League. Like the members of the Mandates Commission these people are not national delegates representing each a Member-State (in that case there could be no place for the American), but professional persons chosen for their personal skill regardless of nationality. Thus you have here some of the most distinguished doctors of the world. They are the High Command in the war against disease.

The President calls on Dr. Miyajima and a Japanese rises in his place. He speaks about the

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terrible epidemics that ravage the Far East—plague, cholera, smallpox. What is wanted, first and foremost, he says, is information about new outbreaks. Could not a Commission of Enquiry be sent to the Far East to find out how much is being done to prevent the spreading of disease and to suggest new measures?

The Committee discuss the idea and like it. They choose from their number three men: Dr. Miyajima, a French doctor, and an English doctor, and ask them to arrange the personnel and the places to be visited. Then they will ask the Council of the League to agree. All their work must be approved by the Council. . . .

Some months later an Englishman steps off a boat in an Eastern port. He is courteously received by the port officials and goes with them to examine some warehouses where cargo from the boats is stored. The Englishman's conversation with his oriental hosts (partly conducted through interpreters) is chiefly about rats. They examine the warehouses to see how far they are proof against invasion by these animals. Some have been built, as it were, on stilts, some have alluring holes in the floor in which a rat might be persuaded to make his nest and so be captured.

Various efforts are made to destroy the animals, for the fleas which live on their bodies in their turn carry the plague microbe. At the quayside a ship is being fumigated to kill the rats that may be hiding in the cargo. One escaping animal may infect a consignment of rice and so presently in a distant town men and women suddenly fall ill and die.

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The Englishman is the League's Commission of Enquiry. No other expert could be spared from his post, and so, except for the temporary companionship of an American doctor who has volunteered to join him, he must make his journey alone. Everywhere he is received with courtesy and sometimes with surprise: 'Is not the main object of the League of Nations to prevent war?' asks one important personage. 'If this is so, what are you doing, a health worker, travelling about on behalf of the League?' The Commissioner, however, in his enthusiasm for that side of the League's work in which he is engaged sees the League differently. 'Its enormously more important work,' he says, 'is to organize peace. . . .'<sup>1</sup>

The following February in Geneva. In the winter mist the lake-side is deserted. Again the Health Committee are meeting round a table in the Secretariat. Dr. Norman White, the Commissioner to the East, is telling them about his travels. Each member of the Committee already has before him a copy of the written report, giving details of the tour. The speaker sits down and one by one the committee members rise to speak their congratulations. Prof. Jorge from Portugal says: 'Dr. Norman White has indeed performed a veritable Odyssey in his travel undertaken to discover means to better the health conditions of the world.'

The Health Committee have often acknowledged that their campaigns go through three stages: the first being to collect the necessary information, the

<sup>1</sup>Quoted by the Commissioner, Dr. Norman White, at the Geneva Institute of International Relations, 1927.

## FIGHTING DISEASE

second to make a plan of attack, the third, action. They are at the second stage in this particular campaign. What is to be done? . . .

March in Singapore—a year later. Not far from the quay in one of the main streets, where rickshaws run side by side with motor cars and Chinese shop signs hang next door to European hotels, a new office has been opened. Enter a lift and a native of Afghanistan will take you up to it, on the third floor. There in a room overlooking the wharfs, half a dozen people are busily occupied. There is an Indian stenographer, a Polish statistician, a Sinhalese, a Jap, a Swiss, an Englishman. You glance at a paper headed *Weekly Bulletin*. The information underneath is meaningless:

BURAKKASUI LAMUEDAZAF SUGALMUFAM DAMVACKAZ  
But someone will explain to you that it is a message in code which is being cabled to four of the most powerful wireless stations in the world. It contains a report of epidemics that have broken out in Eastern ports. To-morrow it will be broadcast for the governments and port officials of the world to pick up. Other wireless stations will scatter a similar message across the Eastern seas for ships to receive. Thus a passenger ship about to call at Colombo learns that some cases of plague have been reported there and the captain forbids the passengers to land for sight-seeing; a cargo boat discovers that its destination, Hong-Kong, is free of epidemics and so elaborate precautions against infection need not hinder the unloading; a boat full of Chinese emigrants to Manchuria pick up the information that cholera has been reported in the port of embarkation

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and so understands that it must be in quarantine when it arrives at Darien.

This 'Eastern Bureau' which collects and transmits information, thus checking the course of epidemics that occur and avoiding unnecessary precautions when they do not, is the outcome of Dr. Norman White's visit two years ago. It was set up by the Health Committee of the League with the help of a generous gift from an American fund, and it is maintained by the willing collaboration of the governments of the East.

Five years later, there is a special meeting of the Health Committee, summoned to hear a request from China. The Committee has grown since its early days. Of the twenty-four doctors, professors, and health administrators who compose it, fifteen have been able to leave their posts in their own countries to be present for this occasion.

The Danish doctor who has presided over the Committee from the beginning opens the new session—the fifteenth. He calls on Dr. Rajchman to speak.

Dr. Rajchman was once a Polish doctor, but in the ten years in which he has been Director of the Health Section of the Secretariat he has belonged to the world. As his Chinese friend says later, he has the 'international method of thought.' Assisted by sixteen medical experts—of whom Dr. Norman White is one—and some clerical assistants, he carries out the decisions of the Health Committee. Recently the Chinese Government asked for his advice as to how they could organize a national

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health service for their country. He therefore went out to China and has presented the Committee with a written report of his visit. But to this he has a few things to add.

He says that he wants his audience to remember the close connection between a country's health and her general prosperity and political stability. The Chinese Government realizes this and China's plan to develop a fine Health Service for her people is part of her great effort for general reconstruction and modernization. It is a very difficult task in this vast land where Provincial Governors are used to going their own way.

Then Dr. Woo Kaeseng of China speaks. He says that Dr. Rajchman's mission to his country has had marvellous results. The Chinese Government sees the possibilities of co-operation with the League and has learnt to appreciate 'the spirit of mutual assistance which animates the League as a whole.' His country has voted a million dollars to carry out the immediate work.

After a general discussion it is decided to help China to accomplish the four particular tasks which, with the assistance of Dr. Rajchman, she has proposed for herself, viz., to improve the quarantine and other health arrangements of her ports; to train a new army of doctors; to set up a Central Health Station; to build hospitals. When this plan has been approved by the Council Dr. Rajchman and his section will see that the necessary help is given. Arrangements will be made both to send expert advisers to China and to train Chinese officials abroad. . . .

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A few months later Dr. Rajchman is again in China. But now a great calamity has befallen the country. The Yangtze and Hwai Rivers and their tributaries have risen with unprecedented rapidity and submerged an area as large as England. The Director, surveying this vast lake in an aeroplane, knows that his plans for new hospitals and health officers will have to wait while he helps his Chinese friends deal with the immediate results of this event. Reporting in Geneva later, he calls it the greatest natural disaster of modern times.<sup>1</sup>

About 50 million people are affected. Many are dead, and most of the survivors have lost their means of livelihood. Crops are destroyed, homes gone, and thousands of miserable flood refugees are huddled together in their mat-huts, with infectious diseases rapidly spreading among them. . . .

As the floods begin to subside a little, on the other side of the world the 12th Assembly is meeting at Geneva. One after another the delegates mount the rostrum and declare, on behalf of their respective countries, their great sympathy for China. A resolution is then passed inviting States-Members to give their help.

The resolution takes effect. Presently various gifts are being shipped to China from many different countries: one hundred thousand doses of anti-typhoid vaccine from Denmark, one ton of quinine tablets from Holland, two fumigation machines and experts to work them from Spain, a mobile bacteriological laboratory and experts from Egypt. To these and other contributions Japan gives generously in

<sup>1</sup>Quarterly Bulletin of the Health Organization, March 1932.

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material, experts and assistance with transport. But later China prefers not to accept her gifts. . . .

It is about ten days since the resolution was passed at the 12th Assembly. Dr. Knud Faber, medical Professor from Copenhagen, has been for some days in Peiping<sup>1</sup>, China's former capital. He has been sent out here under the Health Committee's scheme for helping China and his particular task is to advise what shall be done about the great dearth of doctors. In his own country there is one doctor to every fourteen hundred people; in China the proportion is one to approximately every ninety thousand people. Even so, most doctors concentrate in the towns, and in the country at large the people have to go to a drug shop where a doctor of the old Chinese Medicine will feel the pulse and then make up a mixture. Even in Europe the usual medical training is said to be old fashioned; but the doctor of Chinese Medicine bases his practice on a learning that was developed before the Christian Era.

China needs 50,000 doctors in the near future if she is to have even the minimum. Is it best to train students as quickly as possible, or shall the people wait longer for better trained people? Perhaps the best solution is to train two sets of practitioners, some having gone through a shorter course than others. While Professor Faber is coming to this conclusion the posters in Peiping announce the capture of Mukden by the Japanese. Is it really war between China and Japan? A Japanese was the first to ask for the League's help to fight disease in the Far East. And it was the visit of the League's

<sup>1</sup>Peking is now so named by the Chinese.



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Commissioner nine years ago which first made the Chinese Governments realize the possibilities of help in their own country. Civil war prevented them seeking that help until lately. Japan, too, a little while ago sought the advice of the League and was personally visited by Dr. Rajchman. Are these two countries now going to increase their burden of disease and ill-health by fighting one another? . . .

In spite of the prolonged dispute with Japan which has diverted the Chinese Government's energies and strained its resources, despite also the world economic crisis and the catastrophe of the 1931 floods, there are many signs that China's health campaign advances. The Central Health Station is organized, although the new building that is to house it is delayed for lack of funds. It includes schools of hygiene, chemistry, bacteriology, sanitary engineering, malariology, physical training, maternity and child welfare, health propaganda. It is partly directed by experts from other countries. A Central Hospital is being built in Nanking and another one at Hangchow, the city which Marco Polo found so full of abundant delights as 'might lead an inhabitant to imagine himself in paradise.' The Health Officer in this progressive and beautiful province of Chekeang has been trained for his work in six European countries. A medical school at Woosung outside Shanghai was destroyed when Japan bombarded the city, but the lectures continue in temporary buildings. Up and down the country the school children are being taught rudimentary hygiene, ships are being fumigated, a campaign against smallpox and cholera began in Shanghai

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shortly after the fighting there came to an end, vaccination vans tour the country, and at selected centres malaria is treated and quinine distributed to the victims without charge.

. . . . .

In the summer of 1928 eight out of every ten people in Athens are ill. Men and women in banks, business offices and factories are suddenly seized with fever and aching bones, and in the prisons almost every inmate is stricken. It is an outbreak of dengue or 'break-bone fever,' an epidemic that rarely visits Europe. The Minister of Health discusses with his colleagues what shall be done. Help might be got from the Health Section of the League. Already the country has received valuable aid from there in her fight against tuberculosis. A report on the situation is sent to Geneva.

Some days later one of the staff of the Health Section arrives at the Ministry. . . .

That autumn the 13th Session of the Health Committee meets. On the table there is a letter from the Greek Under-Secretary for Hygiene. After expressing appreciation for the assistance of the member of the Health Section who has organized a successful attack on the dengue epidemic, the letter continues:

'The President of the Greek Council, M. Venizelos, has formed a Secretariat of Health, the control of which has been entrusted to me.

'In my wish to justify the trust thus confided to me, I am requesting the collaboration of the League of Nations and of those colleagues who have already

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shown their sympathy with the development of my work.<sup>1</sup>

‘I consider that one of the primary considerations of every leader should be requisition of detailed knowledge regarding the enemy with which he has to deal, and knowing as I do the interest that your Organization bears towards my country, I earnestly request your assistance by such means as may be at your disposition . . . we should appreciate any suggestions as to the best means of undertaking a campaign for the improvement of the sanitary conditions of Greece. . . .’

On January 25th, 1929, representatives of the Greek Government receive certain distinguished visitors, newly arrived in Athens: Dr. Rajchman and one of his assistants, a Professor and a Public Health Officer from the United States, a Health Officer from Australia, a Director of a famous School of Hygiene in Yugoslavia. These are experts chosen by the Health Section in accordance with the Health Committee’s resolution to accede to the request in the Greek Minister’s letter. They are to investigate the health conditions of Greece. . . .

On April 7th there is another reception in Athens: five members of the Health Committee have arrived to hear the report of the experts mentioned above and to make recommendations to the Greek Government. . . .

In Greece to-day you may find the first fruits: in Athens a splendid school of hygiene—its first director was Dr. Norman White. In the big towns trained health officers, health visitors, sanitary

<sup>1</sup>This doubtless refers to the doctors from the Health Section who had helped him to deal with tuberculosis and dengue.

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inspectors; in some of the villages a better water-supply and better sanitation, and, travelling about the country, demonstrators to teach the people how to fight malaria.

Requests for help in general reorganization have also reached the Health Committee from Bolivia and Liberia and an increasing number of countries ask for advice and help in some particular difficulty: Yugoslavia, Albania, Japan, France, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Siam, Chile, and the Union of South Africa have at one time or another sent in such requests.

. . . . .

From time to time since its inception in 1921 the League's Health Committee has selected a group of experts to be a Commission of Enquiry into some particular disease or cause of ill-health. Such a Commission follows a disease from country to country looking out for conditions that favour the microbe and for preventive measures or treatment that favour man. They come back to Geneva every so often to present their reports. To follow the enquiries of these single-minded people would fill a book. There is only space to glance rapidly at some of their movements.

There is the Epidemics Commission set up suddenly, before the League is properly constituted, to explore the ravages of typhus in Eastern Europe. This epidemic is part of the legacy of war. A band of people must be quickly organized to disinfect and examine and administer relief.

There is the Malaria Commission touring through

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East and West after the mosquito and requesting research men in the best laboratories to explore for substitutes for quinine—for the Commission finds the world supply is only half of the world's requirements.

There is the Secretary of the Leprosy Commission going on a study tour through the Baltic States, ten South American Republics, and eight countries of the Far East, always keeping in mind the question for which he seeks the answer: What practical and universal action can be taken to-day against leprosy, and how can the Health Committee of the League initiate and direct that action?

There is the Commission on Infant Mortality, presided over by an English woman doctor, selecting special areas in five different European countries, where the reasons for every young baby's death are to be investigated. When the Report comes out the evidence collected shows that the number of babies born dead, or dying, after a few days of life, is considerable and that too little attention is paid to the needs of the mother before her child is born—'ante-natal supervision was inadequate in all the districts covered by the enquiry.'<sup>1</sup>

There is the Commission on physical education, conducting its experiments on Scandinavian athletes, the Commissions on Cancer and Tuberculosis, studying the conditions under which these malignant diseases break out in different countries.

<sup>1</sup>Memorandum relating to the Enquiries into the Causes and Prevention of still-births and mortality during the First Year of Life (Austria, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Netherlands, Norway), 1930.

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The story is still very incomplete. Many Commissions remain unmentioned and nothing has been said of study tours, exchange visits between health officers in different countries, conferences called, scholarships offered.

At the time of writing the Health Committee is chiefly concerned with the effect of the world economic crisis on the world's health. The world's poor are at the moment suffering a double privation. On the one hand their wages are reduced or entirely gone, on the other the various forms of social service are being decreased by rigid government economies or private retrenchment. The Health Committee has set itself to find out how best the unemployed or ill-paid worker can nourish himself on a little money, and what economies practised by governments are wise, and which unwise. It is attempting also to estimate what are the effects of the depression on the minds of the workers.

Although most of the League's activities have not gone uncriticized the work of its Health Organization, that is to say, of its Health Committee, Health Section, and all the small committees of Health Experts, has gone unchallenged. It is the best example we know of international co-operation, for in this fight against disease, an evil which cannot be exploited for commercial advantage, every country has been willing to join, and campaigns have been opened regardless of political and racial boundaries, in the East as often as in the West, in non-member states as well as in those that belong to the League.

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### FOR FURTHER READING

*Quarterly Bulletin of the Health Organization.*

N.B.—Most of the reports of the League's Health Organization are too technical to commend themselves to the ordinary reader and no general account of this subject seems yet to have been written.

As a sidelight on the need for a health service in China the reader is referred to the novel by Pearl Buck, *The Good Earth*. This was recommended to the present writer by one of the League's Commissioners in China who considered it the best picture he had found of conditions there.

## CHAPTER VII

### CAMPAIGN AGAINST OPIUM AND DANGEROUS DRUGS

Many evils result from this abuse, for the body wastes, the strength grows weak, the mentality becomes sad, the intellect dull; therefore you may see the abusers of opium sitting at a feast, dreamy and almost speechless, like unto blocks of wood. Often there have come to me in order that I might cure them of their beastly vice, people with promises of hundreds of gold coins if I would get rid of this dangerous habit, so wasteful of life.

KÄMPFER,

*Amoenitatis Exoticae*, 1712.

**I**N India, Persia, China, Turkey there are hundreds of acres of land given up to the cultivation of the opium poppy. The more usual variety has a white flower, but there are other kinds with reddish or purple petals. In every case, the sight of these fields in full bloom is said to be a splendid spectacle.

The opium is collected just after the petals have fallen. Peasants come into the fields in the evening and with a small sharp instrument make incisions in the unripe fruit. A milky substance emerges in the course of the night; it darkens and hardens, and the following morning the labourers come to scrape it off. When further dried and worked into



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cakes this is the raw opium that can be used for one of three general purposes: it can, without further preparation, be chewed or eaten in small quantities; it can, by a process of boiling, roasting, and fermentation be made into a sticky substance for smoking (this is called 'prepared opium'); or its essential chemical content may be manufactured into various drugs of which the best known are morphine and heroin.

The practice of smoking opium is popularly known to be a habit of the Chinese. Probably there are still many people to whom opium means nothing more than a vicious habit peculiar to depraved members of this race who scatter themselves over the world in 'dens,' where a persistent detective may find them inhaling the fragrant and potent fumes. But this is a misconception, unjust to the Chinese and underestimating the problem.

In the first place it is important to realize that opium smoking among the Chinese is almost entirely a solace of the poor and that the Chinese coolie, unlike the members of other races, is generally able to keep the habit within bounds of moderation. Further, it should be known that in many parts of India the practice of *eating* opium is almost universal. Indian mothers when they go to work quieten their babies with an opium pill (Gandhi has stated that he was doubtless doped in this way in his infancy); in country districts a dose of opium is the accepted cure for nearly every ailment, and in the industrial cities it is a medicine and a comfort to the unskilled, ill-paid labourer.

As to the drugs that are manufactured from

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opium and the similar drug, cocaine (derived from the leaves of the coca plant, a product of South America and Java) it is doubtful whether people in general are aware of the tremendous extent to which these are used for non-medical purposes both in the East and West. It seems to be commonly supposed that drug taking is a vice of bored and degenerate people vainly searching for new forms of pleasure. If this is so the number of bored degenerates is surprisingly large. In the United States, for instance, the number of drug addicts was estimated as something under 95,000 for the year 1926 (but the number is said to be decreasing) while the figure given for Egypt is 500,000 for a population of between twelve and thirteen million. In this last country, as in China, it is not the pleasure-seeking rich who are mostly threatened with the drug, but the ordinary labourers, and in Egypt particularly the young men.<sup>1</sup>

Put very briefly the opium problem confronting humanity is something like this:

The drugs derived from opium are invaluable to doctors for relieving pain and inducing sleep. The cultivation of the opium poppy (and similarly of the coca leaf) is therefore necessary. But the world's production of opium is more than ten times the amount required for medical and scientific purposes. The vast surplus is eaten, smoked, or taken in the form of manufactured drugs by private persons the world over. It is eaten chiefly in India where the popular belief in its curative powers is deep-rooted. Modern medical opinion, however, contradicts this idea and

<sup>1</sup>See Russell Pasha's reports to the Opium Advisory Committee.

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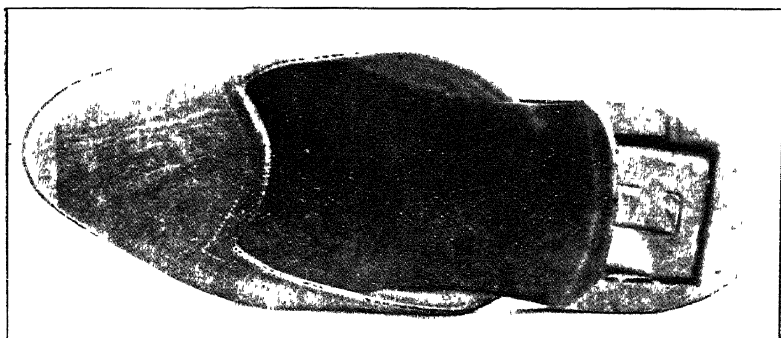
declares that far from having curative powers opium impairs the body's resistance to disease and weakens the digestive system, although these effects may not be obvious when the dose remains small and the addict is in good health. When the dose is increased the addict becomes a slave to the habit. His body and mind degenerate, both his financial and mental resources are drained in order to satisfy his craving, and as a member of society he is of no more consequence than the people aptly described by the eighteenth-century traveller quoted at the head of this chapter.

Opium smoking has similar results to opium eating. It is practised more by the Chinese than by any other race, but, as already stated, this people, more than any other, seem equipped with the power of keeping the habit under control, sometimes so satisfactorily that it is doubtful whether it does more harm than tobacco. On the other hand, there are a great many Chinese who have become slaves to the habit and who obey the necessity to satisfy their craving with the same utter disregard of money and moral principles as the undisciplined opium eater—and among races, other than the Chinese, the proportion of opium smokers who fall to this level is much more considerable.

If it is so far clear that the most pernicious characteristic of opium is its power of enslaving its addicts in an almost unbreakable habit, this becomes much more obvious when the opiate is taken in a manufactured and concentrated form, either being snuffed up the nose or injected with a hypodermic needle. Dr. Anselmino, an expert on the Central



Various lots of seized opium and receptacles used for smuggling.  
The sausages were filled with opium.



Common method of smuggling prepared opium in shoes worn by the smuggler.  
(These pictures are reproduced by kind permission of The League of Nations Secretariat )

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## CAMPAIGN AGAINST OPIUM

Opium Board at Geneva, in a technical treatise on Narcotic Drugs,<sup>1</sup> speaks of the 'uncontrollable desire for ever larger quantities' manifested by people who take morphine. In the same treatise he points out that whereas morphine like both raw and prepared opium does not drive the addict to violence and crime, heroin (more correctly called diacetal-morphine) commonly leads to this end. He is inclined to think that for this reason the social danger of heroin outweighs its medical value and that it might be advisable for the world to prohibit its manufacture entirely. His summary of the use and abuse of narcotics is worth quoting:

In the hands of the physician, narcotic drugs are indispensable medicaments, whilst in the hands of the layman they spell ruin. All habit-forming narcotic drugs have this in common—that their continued use and abuse in every case leads sooner or later to loss of moral control and even to physical and mental collapse.

So much for one half of the opium problem—the half that is concerned with the power of the opiate against human weakness, human ignorance, and also, it should be noted, human poverty, for the opium and drug habit is indirectly encouraged by wretched conditions of labour.

The other half of the problem is economic and comes from the fact that an immediate reduction of opium poppy cultivation to the medical requirements of the world would mean great financial loss to thousands of people—farmers and peasants who cultivate the poppy, factory owners and factory

<sup>1</sup>A.B.C. of Narcotic Drugs, No. C.C.P. 44 (1).

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workers who put the raw opium on the market, chemical manufacturers who make the derivative drugs, middlemen and transport workers directly or incidentally concerned in the trade, and governments who draw their revenues from opium monopolies.

This last point is perhaps the most ironic feature of the whole subject under discussion. The discovery of the profitableness of opium cultivation seems to have impressed the Colonial powers in the Far East before the realization of their moral responsibility in encouraging the opium habit. So that we find Great Britain, France, Holland, Portugal, and Japan making use of opium profits in order to help meet the expenses of Colonial government. In the Straits Settlements, for instance, opium is said to contribute more than one third of the revenue. India provides another example. There, opium cultivation is helped by government loans and the sale of the product is a government monopoly. In the government factory at Ghazipur it is dried and prepared for the various forms of consumption. Some of it is exported into countries where opium smoking is still more or less an accepted practice; but this export is ultimately to be brought to an end by a fixed annual reduction in the next few years. Some of the remaining opium is exported for medical purposes to Europe or kept for the same purpose in India. The rest goes to the various provinces of India where it is sold in 'government' shops. Some provinces consume much more than others. Assam is one of the black spots. But a sudden prohibition there would mean a loss of revenue that

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could only be made up by the introduction of new and heavy taxes. The provincial government has therefore decided on a policy of gradual suppression which began in 1927. Every consumer is licensed and has a card on which his ration per month is stated. There is a good deal of smuggling to be checked here as elsewhere. The tendency to increase the price of government opium in India with intent to dissuade customers, seems only to encourage the illicit traffic.

In 1925 the National Congress of India passed the following resolution which was cabled to the Opium Conference at their meeting in Geneva:

“The Congress is of opinion that the policy of the Government of India in using the drink and drug habits of the people as a source of revenue is detrimental to the moral welfare of the people of India and would therefore welcome its abolition. . . .”

The first attempt at an International Conference to discuss measures for suppressing the opium evil came a few years before the Great War. The conference was called at the suggestion of the United States and was largely due to the insistence of Bishop Brent, an American missionary. It is said that it was partly inspired by the gallant determination of China to eradicate the habit of opium smoking from her land. The Conference met at the Hague in 1912. It consisted of the representatives of twelve countries who drew up an elaborate treaty in six chapters. It is elaborate because it is full of caution. Briefly it represents a very tentative agreement that the signatory powers shall see what they can do by



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new legislation and stricter administration to limit the trade in narcotics, to suppress gradually the use of 'prepared' opium for smoking, and to restrict the sale of dangerous drugs to medical and scientific purposes. The signatory powers were so slow in ratifying the Convention that two more conferences had to be called—in 1913 and 1914—to hasten its adoption.

Then came the World War, bringing in its train general political instability and giving an incentive to the chemical industry since there was an abundance of physical pain to be relieved. Civil war in China swiftly followed, and the general result was an increase in the opium and drug trade and new fields of poppies in China where the previous prohibition became a dead letter.

When the framers of the League Covenant put a clause in Article 23 making the League responsible for enforcing the Hague Convention this meant that in future the responsibility for fighting the opium and drug menace rested with the Society of Nations. The remainder of this chapter will be an attempt to show how the League is conducting the campaign.

At the very beginning of things the Assembly decided that a permanent committee should be set up to keep watch and advise action. This is called the Advisory Committee on Opium and Dangerous Drugs and at the time of writing consists of twenty members assisted by three experts, called 'assessors.'

The Advisory Committee meets once or twice a year and keeps up an active correspondence with governments, in either pressing for information or

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urging advice. The actual work of correspondence is actually carried out by the Opium Section of the Secretariat and it is here that the facts and figures—very necessary intelligence in this kind of warfare—are tabulated and considered by a staff that in times of pressure has been known to work willingly long into the night.

Its first piece of constructive work was to devise a plan by which all drugs bought and sold anywhere in the world should be registered. Since this has been adopted every chemical firm wishing to export drugs to another country must first get a licence from its own government. The licence is only granted when the chemical firm produces a certificate from the government of the importing country stating that the drugs are required there for legitimate purposes.

Similarly every wholesaler has to keep a strict account of every drug he sells to chemist shops, and the chemists, who are only allowed to sell when a doctor's prescription is presented, must keep an account of the customers who buy drugs from them. Let the reader try to obtain morphine on his own responsibility in any chemist's shop in almost any Member-State of the League and he will realize that this plan is in active operation. Open trading in drugs is now confined to medical requirements. This means that drug addicts can only buy their drugs from persons who think it worth while risking imprisonment in order to sell smuggled goods. Naturally the dealers do this at enormous profits to themselves. As will be seen presently, the most sensational work of the League in this attack

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on narcotics is in urging on its Member-States to track down these remorseless profiteers who make fortunes out of the insatiable craving of drug victims. There is real co-operation between States in this matter. Often a smuggler congratulates himself on getting safely on board with his goods, little knowing that a wireless message sent to his port of disembarkation has called up a group of detectives bent on catching him.

Most if not all the attacks launched in the last few years have been planned by the Advisory Committee with the help of the Opium Section. For instance, two International Conferences were called at the end of 1924 and the beginning of 1925. The first was a small one, consisting only of States concerned in opium smoking, the second, a much larger one, to deal with drugs. There was a good deal of controversy at both, and some critics have doubted whether the Agreement and the Convention finally drawn up carried things much farther than the pre-War decisions at the Hague. Economic interests were a drag on success. One outcome of the Conferences which must be mentioned was the setting up of a Central Opium Board. This is a small impartial Committee that deals almost entirely with statistics, collecting them as thoroughly as the increasing co-operation of governments will allow and publishing them for general use. The Advisory Committee remains to advise action.

In 1931 the most important conference yet held in connection with the Drug Trade met in Geneva at the instance of the Twelfth Assembly of the League. Fifty-seven countries attended including

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all who were concerned either in the supply or the consumption of drugs. Its purpose was to put some definite and stated limit to the quantity of drugs made in the world. To this end the Advisory Committee had prepared a draft convention which was to give an allowance, or quota, of the world's needs to each of the manufacturing countries, and the manufacturing countries themselves<sup>1</sup> had been asked to try to come to a previous agreement on these quotas. This, however, they had failed to do. The Conference then found that it preferred to throw aside the quota plan and adopt a new scheme. Under this, each country is obliged to let the Central Opium Board know in advance what will be its medical and scientific requirements. It is then not allowed, according to the Convention that was adopted, to make more than these requirements, less its imports and less legitimate stocks. (But stocks held by the governments are not subject to any limitation, which is a weak point, considering that government officials are not everywhere above bribery and corruption.) The Central Opium Board is to publish an annual statement showing what each country proposes to import, export, or manufacture in the forthcoming year. The Convention was to come into force ninety days after it had been ratified by twenty-five states including four of the manufacturing countries. The necessary number of ratifications had been reported by April 10th, 1933.

Apart from these Conferences at Geneva, Commissions of Enquiry have been sent into the Far East

<sup>1</sup>i.e., France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A.

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and to Persia, and a Conference on Opium Smoking held at Bangkok in 1931 made some plans, though rather timid ones, for repressing this practice. The government opium monopolies seem to be a real obstacle to progress.

The Council regularly receives a report from the Advisory Committee with an account of its discussions and a statement of requests and suggestions. These last are answered and they may be confirmed or questioned at the annual meeting of the Assembly.

The foregoing paragraphs give the merest bird's-eye view of the League's war against the drug evil. It is more interesting to come to earth and observe the campaign at closer quarters.

Among the publications of the Advisory Committee, mentioned above, there is to be found a report called: *List of Illicit Transactions and Seizures reported to the League of Nations*. A casual glance might suggest that it is a collection of dull tabulated matter, but a closer scrutiny will show that you have here a summary of the most interesting detective work in the world. Herein are recorded the people and circumstances in every case of opium and drug smuggling that has been discovered by the customs officers or police of any country. All such seizures of contraband goods are now reported to the Opium Section of the Secretariat and passed on by them to the members of the Advisory Committee, who tabulate them from time to time for the use of the Council and Assembly. A few extracts from the column headed 'Remarks' in the report will be sufficient to indicate the ingenuity of the smugglers:

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'The drug was found inside a packet of cigarettes which accused was in the act of throwing downstairs.'

'Found concealed under the seat in a second-class compartment on the train from Switzerland.'

'Carried in a double-bottomed pail.'

'Concealed in a small loaf.'

'Six cases marked A.G.S. arrived on board, cases 5 and 6 manifested as "Dried Shrimps." Upon inspection they were found to contain opium.'

'Found by the customs in a double-bottomed trunk concealed in an old cotton cushion.'

'Found in a hole cut in the after-mast.'

Here is one complete story:

' . . . a Government agent reported that Chan had approached him and told him that arrangements had been made for the agent to bring off some opium from the *Empress of France*. The agent was given a free hand in getting the opium off the ship. . . . The agent approached the vessel about midnight in a rowboat and, according to instructions received from the Chinese, he proceeded to a porthole, over which hung a red cloth, through which a light was shining. On arriving at this porthole, a long piece of twine was noticed, and the prearranged signal of two jerks was given by the agent who at the same time attached to the end of the twine one-half of a sheet of note-paper that had been given him by Chan, the other portion being in the possession of the Chinese confederate on the ship, whose name is unknown. The twine was immediately pulled through the porthole, and shortly afterwards the opium was lowered. It was taken ashore by the agent, and carried to a room in the hotel, in the adjoining rooms of which a number of officers were located. . . . Shortly afterwards, Charlie Sam came to

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the agent's room to fetch the opium. He wrapped it up in a parcel and as he was leaving the room he was arrested. Mah Poy, at the same moment was at the door of the room across the hall waiting for Charlie Sam, and he was arrested also. The police then proceeded to Mah Poy's hotel and, while there, Lee Kim and Chan arrived. They were also arrested. In Lee Kim's room a number of important documents torn in small pieces and written in Chinese were found in the waste-paper basket. These were pieced together and translated, as a result of which most valuable information was obtained as to the methods by which Lee Kim and his confederates hoped to outwit the authorities in landing narcotics in Canada.<sup>1</sup>

By collecting these reports the Advisory Committee finds out which are the most notorious gangs of traffickers, discovers which factories supply them with the forbidden goods, and learns which countries are being chiefly supplied—all very necessary data for a body that is responsible for directing the world's efforts to suppress all unauthorized trade in narcotics.<sup>2</sup>

The Minutes of the sessions of the Committee are equally interesting in another way.

Anyone reading these pages or being present at the public sessions of the Committee must soon realize that real international co-operation is full of psychological discomfort for the national representatives that have to sit round a table and hammer out a plan together, and where you have internationalism beginning to work it is obvious that the word signifies not a levelling of national differences,

<sup>1</sup>Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs. List of Illicit Transactions and Seizures reported to the League of Nations. October 1930.

<sup>2</sup>See Illustration, p. 128.

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but a vigorous interplay of these differences and a heightening of national consciousness in each representative. It is often a sublimated form of warfare, accompanied by handshakes and smiles and private dinners in Geneva hotels.

When the Committee considers the reports that various governments have sent in (showing what legislative or other measures they have adopted in compliance with the Hague and Geneva conventions, and giving their statistics for the exports and imports of narcotics), the national sensitiveness of the Committee members is dramatically evident. Each one is anxious to justify his country's report, but alert to notice weaknesses in the reports of others. There is sometimes a lack of agreement between the particulars that one country gives of its drug exports and the corresponding import figures of the countries to which the drugs were sent. The Committee pounces on these discrepancies and the countries concerned have to explain them. The members of the Committee are anxious to prove that their customs authorities are very vigilant and that no contraband goods get in or out.

Similarly when discussing the annual list of smuggling cases brought to light it is obviously unpleasant for any member of the Committee who finds himself the compatriot of a manufacturer or gangster who has been caught in the illicit traffic. He is likely to be questioned for further information and if the measures to prevent smuggling and the punishments given by his country seem inadequate to the members of the Committee, they say so. On the other hand the Committee is generous in its



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tributes and one member will often publicly congratulate another on his country's successful efforts against the evil they are all combating—as, for instance, when the figures for the consumption of opium in Formosa earned such warm congratulations from some members of the Committee that the Japanese delegate expressed himself as 'overwhelmed by the tribute.'

Perhaps two of the liveliest and also two of the most significant incidents that have occurred during the more recent Committee meetings have been contributed by China and Egypt respectively.

In 1929 there were some striking revelations of the amount of drugs smuggled into China. One of the assessors on the Committee estimated that in the first quarter of 1927 about five tons of heroin had got into China from European manufacturers, whereas the medical requirements of the country were at the most one tenth of a ton for a whole year. To quote the Minutes:

Mr. Lyall felt no surprise that the Chinese Government should desire that, when it was asked for explanations of the flood of opium passing from China to the foreign colonies of the Western Powers in the Far East this much more poisonous flood of heroin from Europe to China should be taken into account. He even agreed with M. de Vasconcellos that, so long as this flood of heroin continued, it was dangerous for the Chinese Government suddenly to suppress the smoking of opium, which afforded to a certain extent a protection against the much more dangerous abuse of heroin and morphine.

This sympathetic speech doubtless encouraged

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Mr. Wang-King-Ky of China to break the silence which he had hitherto observed and to give impassioned expression to some of the things that were rankling in his heart. Besides protesting at the 'roaring floods' of manufactured drugs that were pouring into China 'and threatening to submerge her,' he reminded the Conference that opium smoking was not a custom invented by the Chinese but had been introduced by Arab traders. He further reminded the Committee how opium smoking had been later forbidden but how the opium trade had been revived by the Opium Wars with England<sup>1</sup> ('the starting point for the general poisoning of the Chinese people'). He protested against the Unequal Treaties which rendered his country powerless to interfere in the Concessions<sup>2</sup> and while acknowledging Japan's success against opium smoking in Formosa intimated that that country had been 'torn from the mother country' at the price of much suffering.

The British and Japanese delegates protested against these political references to past history which Mr. Wang-King-Ky continued to make, in spite of the Chairman's repeated request that he would avoid political matters. The British delegates

<sup>1</sup>John Bright said in 1858. 'The first war was called, and appropriately called the "Opium War." No man with a spark of humanity in his composition, no man who cares anything for the opinion of his fellow countrymen, has dared to justify that war. The war which has just been concluded had its origin in the first war; for the enormities committed in the first war are the foundations of the implacable hostility which it is said the inhabitants of Canton bear to all persons connected with the English name.'

<sup>2</sup>Land ceded by China in the latter half of the last century, to Western Powers together with commercial facilities.

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deplored that such things should be said before a purely technical committee. But indiscreet or out of place though these remarks may have been, they were a reminder that the opium problem is bound up with a notorious episode in British history for which a new generation of British people can best make amends by the most arduous contribution to the campaign we are considering.

The second incident referred to concerns Egypt. This country is not yet a member of the League, but that is no reason for her not being represented on one of the League's permanent committees. The United States, for example, had been a member of the committee from the beginning. Egypt joined the committee as a visitor in 1930 when Russell Pasha, chief of the Cairo City Police, explained how his country was being threatened with ruin by the 'introduction of these European poisons.' The following year the Committee which had hitherto been composed of members of countries concerned in the cultivation of opium or the manufacture of drugs was enlarged to include representatives of other countries, particularly those that were the 'victims' of the illicit traffic. In that year Russell Pasha came again. This time he brought with him a film showing the sufferings of the drug addict when his craving is unsatisfied and this he insisted on showing the Committee.

What the Committee felt about this unusual procedure the Minutes do not record; but the significance of the incident lies in the fact that here is a country that neither grows opium nor manufactures drugs trying to rouse to more vigorous effort

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the representatives of the countries engaged in their production and manufacture.

When the Assembly of 1927 decided that the Advisory Committee should be enlarged by the addition of 'victim' countries the Advisory Committee was not altogether pleased. Some members declared that the Committee would be too large and cumbersome, and it was noticeable that those who protested were countries most interested in manufacture or revenue or both. It is clear that some countries on the Committee are troubled by conflicting desires. They must help reduce the quantities of opium and drugs in the world. At the same time they do not want to see their chemical industries closing down for lack of work or their colonial administration ruined for lack of revenue. To them the delegate of Venezuela perhaps seemed impertinent when he urged the Tenth Assembly to set up 'an inquiry into the causes which had hitherto prevented the manufacturing countries from limiting manufacture.'

The next step is an attempt to limit the cultivation of the opium poppy. Hitherto this has been considered a useless adventure because of the increasing poppy fields of China. It is often forgotten by people, who have a vague and impatient theory that the League is a superimposed authority that can interfere in every country except the theorist's own, that the League can only work through governments. Because the government of China has remained ineffective over so much of the land, it has seemed useless to try to limit or ration the poppy fields of the world. Yet to a lay observer this sort of limitation

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seems the only really effectual one, for while secret preparation in manufacture may be difficult, clandestine poppy growing is presumably impossible.

By the time this book is published the poppy fields will, perhaps, be the chief objective in the League's fight. And the campaign will continue with the attacking army still struggling to kill the enemy without too many losses on its own side.

It must be admitted, however, that in spite of the sacrifices that victory demands, victory must come in the end—unless civilization completely collapses in the meantime. The institution of the League has brought co-ordination and a headquarters and the collecting of reliable information has been like a searchlight on the weak points in the attack. The Advisory Committee, the Conferences, the Council and the Assembly meetings have provided opportunities for the exchange of useful information as well as for sharp criticism. The general result has been a stirring of consciences in most unlikely quarters and a tremendous increase of efficiency in putting pledges into effect.

The only question is not can the enemy be quelled, but how soon, and how much havoc must be wrought before the finish?

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## CHAPTER VIII

### WHERE ARE THE SLAVES?

THOMAS CLARKSON in his famous *History of the Slave Trade* tells how in the earlier stages of the campaign a bill was introduced into the English Parliament for the regulation of slave-trading vessels; the purpose being to limit the number of slaves according to the size of the ship. The bill produced such a host of petitions from Liverpool ship-owners that the House decided to hear witnesses. These opponents of the bill then argued that, in the first place, regulation was quite unnecessary: the slaves had a sufficiency of everything and the voyage was 'one of the happiest periods of a negro's life.' In the second place, they declared that any restriction as to numbers would be the utter ruin of the trade. But by means of thorough cross-examination the following facts were elicited—and even these it was afterwards found only applied to the better kind of ship:

'Every slave, whatever his size might be, was found to have only five feet and six inches length, and sixteen inches in breadth, to lie in. The floor was covered with bodies stowed or packed according to this allowance. But between the floor and the deck or ceiling were often platforms or broad shelves in the midway which were covered with bodies also. The height from the floor to the ceiling, within which space the bodies on the floor and those on the platforms

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lay, seldom exceeded four feet eight inches, and in some cases it did not exceed four feet.

‘The men were chained two and two together by their hands and feet, and were chained also by means of ring bolts, which were fastened to the deck.’

In spite of strenuous opposition and obstructionist tactics this, ‘the first bill that ever put fetters upon that barbarous and destructive monster, the slave-trade’ became law in July 1788. Nineteen years later the bill for the total abolition of the British Slave Trade struggled through both Houses and on March 25 it received the Royal Assent, ‘as the clock struck twelve,’ says Clarkson, ‘just when the sun was in its meridian splendour to witness this august act.’

Denmark had already led the way against the slave trade by an Act in 1792 and other European countries now followed suit. The United States abolished the trade in the same year as Great Britain.

The institution of *slave-owning* still remained however, and it was against this right to hold human beings as property that the Anti-Slavery Movement now fought. In 1833 the British Act of Abolition was passed and in 1863 the American Act of Emancipation freed the last of the slaves in the United States.

After this it was generally assumed that Clarkson’s monster was quite dead, that both slave-trading and slave-owning had been eradicated from the world.

The monster, however, like the monsters of mythology, took a lot of killing. In the first post-War years travellers brought back suspicious tales from Africa and Asia. The question began to be discussed at Geneva.



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It was a British delegate, Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland, who first introduced the question to a League Assembly. He referred to the rumours of slavery in Africa. He believed there was some truth in them. It was a matter, he said, with which the League ought to deal, 'being itself a trustee for humanity, and it would be a blot on the escutcheon of the League of Nations if it did not do so.'

Dr. Nansen, already distinguished as the champion of the prisoner of war and the refugee, rallied to the cause. But perhaps the most impressive appeal came from M. Bonamy of Haiti, when that negro delegate went up to the rostrum and said:

' . . . there are many among you who could have found more eloquent words than I, yet there is no one who could speak with deeper feeling or conviction, or with a greater desire for success. For I speak on behalf of a country the inhabitants of which once knew the terrible system of slavery. . . . I speak on behalf of the whole coloured race when I ask the great civilized Powers who are more advanced than we are, to assist the unfortunate Africans to rise to a higher stage of civilization.'

By a curious irony of circumstance the next item on the Agenda that day was the admission of the Abyssinian Delegates to the Assembly. When these tall swarthy Ethiopians came in, wearing their striking national costume, some of those who welcomed them with applause must have recalled stories of slave raids on Abyssinian villages and wondered if it was true that slaves were openly owned in the Abyssinian capital, Addis Ababa.

The Sixth Committee of the Assembly, to which

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the question of slavery had been referred, recommended that a Temporary Slavery Commission should be appointed by the Council. This was to collect all possible information both from governments and private individuals. When the Sixth Assembly met in 1925 the work had been very thoroughly accomplished. The report of the Temporary Slavery Commission was presented and its revelations more than corroborated the rumours first referred to by the British Delegate.

There was no doubt that slavery still existed. It was even recognized by law in some Mohammedan countries and in one Christian country—Abyssinia. Slave raiding, though rare, happened round the Sahara desert, where wandering tribes sometimes descended on villages and captured women and children.

Slave-trading was still carried on in some places:

‘. . . there can be no doubt that negroes from the African continent are imported and sold as slaves in several districts of Arabia.’

Children were in some countries ‘adopted’ and turned into household drudges:

‘Children in Africa, as also in most Eastern countries, are called upon to perform a great deal of menial work. Households in which there are no children . . . are therefore generally eager to procure children to act as household drudges. . . . The system of procuring children for so-called “adoption” is alleged to prevail with the knowledge of the Government in some cases, as, for instance, in China, Hong-Kong, and the Straits Settlements under the name of Mui Tsai.’

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The custom in some countries by which a debtor pawns himself to his creditor was found to be a form of slavery.

‘There is reliable information that many pathetic forms of debtor pledging exist in some countries in America, where they constitute abuses of a system called “peonage.” Under this system the debtor agrees to work for the creditor until the labour supplied is considered equivalent to the values of the land allotted to him or any advances made to him. It often happens that the creditor so arranges that his debtors get more and more into debt, with the result that, what was in the beginning only an apparently equitable contract, is transformed finally into enslavement for life.’

Other forms of slavery noted by the Commission were ‘Domestic Slavery,’ a kind of serfdom customary with African tribes, and ‘Forced’ or ‘Compulsory Labour.’ This last is a custom, not of native tribes, but of white settlers. It is widely used by colonizing powers for making roads and railways and it is often paid for at a fixed rate. In that case it is a kind of industrial conscription and is justified by those who enforce it on the grounds that it is for the good of the community. But sometimes it is used by private commercial firms and sometimes it is unpaid.

The Temporary Slavery Commission made a great many suggestions for the gradual abolition of all forms of slavery.

These together with its discoveries as to the existence of slavery were discussed by the Assembly’s Sixth Committee and it was decided to draw up a

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convention for every nation to sign. The convention was duly drafted and during the following year it was circulated through the world, and every responsible government was asked to consider it. Then during the Seventh Assembly the President made the following announcement:

‘I have to inform you that the Convention on Slavery is open for the signatures of delegations from to-day, September 25th, 1926. It may be signed in the Secretary-General’s Office.’

Twenty states immediately signed the Convention and sixteen others followed within the next year. At the time of writing there are forty-nine signatures, thirty-nine of which have been ratified. The Convention is open to non-members as well as members of the League. It was the first League Convention to be signed by the United States.

Countries that have subscribed to the Convention thereby undertake

‘to bring about progressively and as soon as possible the complete abolition of slavery in all its forms.’

In a book of this size and character it is not practicable to quote or describe the twelve articles that make it clear how this abolition is to be effected, but the Convention is easy to obtain.<sup>1</sup>

The Seventh Assembly besides throwing open the Convention to the world for signature had asked the Council to collect information each year as to what steps various governments were taking to

<sup>1</sup>From Allen and Unwin, League of Nations Agents for Great Britain. It is also published in Lady Simon’s *Slavery* referred to at the end of this chapter.

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carry out their promises under the Convention, and information began to flow to Geneva from all over the world. The reports that were circulated in the Council and the Assembly during the next few years showed that things were happening. Various governments sent copies of new laws and sometimes also information as to how these were being carried out. The British Government reported a new ordinance in Sierra Leone giving 200,000 slaves their freedom and new measures to eradicate Mui Tsai from Hong-Kong. It also gave accounts of expeditions that were sent into a wild part of Burma for the release of thousands of slaves there. So undeveloped was this region that natives had to be employed to make rough paths whereby the British officials could get from village to village. The slave-owning chiefs were visited, the slaves freed, and compensation paid. In spite of the war-like temperament of the people the expedition had a friendly reception and the report remarks how the sports and gun displays of the British officials attracted interested crowds.

From Abyssinia there came regularly an impressive document giving two long lists, one of slaves who had been set free, and one of owners who had been punished. Abyssinia though unready to sign the Convention had gone as far as forbidding any addition to the slaves already in being.

There came also information about the capture of slave smugglers. In 1928 the Italian Government reported the capture of five Arabs who had collected and sold from Tripoli a woman and four children at prices ranging from 900 to 2,000 lire. In 1930 the

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Persian government recounted how parties of runaway slaves from Arabia had taken refuge in ports on the Persian Gulf and been set free, and in the following year came the story of one Abdullah, son of Ahmed, a native of Zanzibar who had been enslaved to dive for pearls and 'fled from his oppressors in a sailing-boat and after fourteen days of suffering and privations arrived at the Island of Hengum. . . . He was immediately set at liberty.'

All this was voluntary information; but about 1929 there came rumours of a dreadful state of things in Liberia. Then began one of the most interesting pieces of humanitarian work undertaken by the League. The story is worth telling in some detail.

The astonishing and ironical fact about slavery in Liberia in our own day is that it directly resulted from the emancipation of slaves in the last century. A little more than a hundred years ago the American Colonization Society was looking about the world to find a suitable home for some of the newly liberated slaves in the United States. Most of these negroes remained in America, but the idea of presenting those who wished for it with a tract of land where they could set up a republic for themselves seemed a good one, and what could be more suitable than to procure for them an area in Africa, the continent from which most of their forefathers had been bought or stolen? The British Government had already bought from native chiefs Sierra Leone, on the west coast, for the liberated slaves in England. The American Colonization Society similarly acquired an adjoining area.

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So the first shipload of rejoicing ex-slaves set sail from America for the land of their ancestors. Their delight in their liberty and their hopes for the future can be guessed from the name they gave their new country and from the national shield which they adopted. The country should be called Liberia and the national shield shows a ship, a dove bearing a scroll, an African palm, a plough and a spade. Underneath these symbols are the words:

THE LOVE OF LIBERTY BROUGHT US HERE.

The negro colonists settled along the coast and disregarded at first the dark hinterland which also belonged to them. The native tribes of the coast were not unaccustomed to meeting people from other countries, for ships often passed by and the Kru tribes, people of fine physique, had made it their business to put out to sea in their little boats and offer their labour to any ship that came near. They were often taken on board to help with the unloading at the next port of call, to be brought home on the return journey.

After a while the Americo-Liberians, as they came to be called to distinguish them from the natives, felt obliged to penetrate the interior. Traders had always been refused entrance here. It was one of the most isolated parts of Africa, a dense bush hiding strange animals and undiscovered tribes.

They decided to divide it up into five districts each under a District Commissioner, and the District Commissioner's chief task would be to collect a tax from the natives. When the natives were unsubmissive, the Americo-Liberians fought them with their national army, the Liberian Frontier

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Force. Then a business magnate in the United States, a Mr. Firestone, asked to be allowed to develop rubber plantations there. A bargain with him considerably assisted the Liberian Government in the financial difficulties that were always surrounding it; so the contract was made.

But what of the natives thus disturbed by 'civilized' rulers of their own race and colour, by soldiers erecting barracks and calling for roads, and by the white agents of Mr. Firestone, clearing the bush and setting up machinery?

They are primitive peoples belonging to various tribes and acknowledging the supremacy of their Chiefs and Paramount Chiefs. They subsist largely on rice and live in villages of thatched huts. All about them is the dense green bush, that travellers, making their way by the narrow and difficult paths, find monotonous and depressing. Living unmolested within it are rare animals such as the bay-thighed Diana monkey and the golden cat; and the tribal huntsmen tell stories, so far unverified, of pygmy elephants. Some of the remoter tribes are cannibals, but mostly they seem to be simple superstitious people with their own moral standards. Occasionally there is inter-tribal fighting when captives become the slaves of their conquerors.

But it was not stories of these prisoners taken into domestic slavery by tribesmen that aroused the indignation of some white people. These 'domestic slaves' of the natives are apparently treated kindly and grow up very much as free men in the villages of their new tribe. The conditions of natives who came under the coercion of the Americo-Liberians



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were apparently very different. It was reported that these were shipped abroad against their will to labour in the Spanish plantations of Fernando Po, that they were compelled to work for the Firestone Company to the neglect of their own farms, and that they were cruelly treated by the District Commissioners and the Liberian Frontier Force through exactions, fines, and punishments.

The Liberians were not insensitive to these charges. During the Tenth Assembly the chief Liberian delegate eloquently protested against them and declared that his country was willing to submit to an International Inquiry. In a letter to the Council, the Liberian delegate wrote as follows:

‘... I have the honour to inform you that, in order to dispel once and for all even the slightest doubts, and in order to enlighten the League of Nations and the public, my Government has decided to put the matter into the hands of an International Inquiry Commission, which shall meet on the spot and, by means of an impartial, serious and detailed investigation, find out whether slavery or forced labour is or is not practised in Liberia.’

The Commission came into being in 1930. It comprised three persons: Mr. Barclay, an ex-President of Liberia, Dr. Charles S. Johnson, a distinguished negro from the United States, and Dr. Cuthbert Christy, an experienced British missionary. The last member acted as Chairman and the Commission has consequently come to be known as the Christy Commission. It made a tour of Liberia from April to September of 1930, questioning all kinds of people from the President himself in

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Monrovia, the capital, to chiefs and tribesmen of the interior.

Its report was a sensational document. The Commissioners declared that although the Liberian Government did not recognize slavery and that slaves, if they could get to a law court, could obtain their liberty, nevertheless many forms of slavery existed.

In the first place the practice of pawning dependents as a means of raising money was commonly practised. The Commission collected various pawn certificates in illustration of this. Here is one of them.

‘Gbowah Compound  
Bharzon Dist—4

May 25, 1928.

This is to certify that I Sidi Weah at Gbowah Section have pawned one girl and one boy to Sergeant Johnny Williams until the amount £13 10s. thirteen pounds ten shillings sterling which I due him be pay to him at any time.

Principal,  
SIDE WEAH.

Witness,  
Moses S. Weah.

Approved J. C. Phillips,  
D.C. Coast,  
District L.F.F.  
May 23, 1928.’

Often the natives were forced to pawn their relatives in order to raise the money demanded from them by the Government officials. In the interior the Commissioners took down the complaints of many of the natives. The following is typical:

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'I am from this section. First time all round no town was here except this Kakata. My father's brother when he was killing elephants, worked thru this road. When people from the country walked they had to clear the road to walk. Since this Liberian business start, it has been eight years now, just running round, and we cannot sit down. We have been working as labourers. We have been as far as Sanoquelle—no chop for us to eat. When tax came they caught my father who was chief. He was deaf and blind in one eye; where was he to get the money? One Kroo man came to us, and my father told the Kroo man to lend him £2. The man lent him the £2, and he put one boy in pawn. I went to Monrovia and worked £2. And he turned the money over to the Kroo man, and redeemed the boy. The man brought the money but the soldiers caught him on the road, beat him, and we have not seen the man since. They took him as labourer, took me to Banga, I stayed there one week, with nothing to eat. They took my brother down and beat him. When he came he vomited blood and died. That is why I keep walking round because I cannot stay one place. Then they sent us back and every time we work on the road, and they flog us and when you leave the road, you are half dead—no chop to eat. I have one sister and she is in pawn; I am the one who works to redeem my uncle's child in pawn. We are on this Government work, I have my own gun. I went to walk in the bush one day, I met soldiers on the way, they took the gun from me, beat me, and here is the mark on my thigh. When we are on labourer work they beat us. When we take our own rice they beat us. The soldiers took my gun from me, tied me and fined me £4. My uncle put someone in pawn to get me out. When we went down the road, the labourer company down the road took my rice from me. We have no clothes to wear. One time,

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Faulkner came here and called all the country people. In Kakata they beat me. Look at the mark on my foot. We are not working any farm. When we work they make us pay monthly rice and palm oil. We are suffering.'

The above quotation also illustrates the treatment of the natives by the Liberian Frontier Force when the army supervised the building of roads in the interior. The Commissioners found the system of compulsory labour was always thus abused, the natives being unpaid, intimidated, and ill-treated. They also discovered that the officials often kept a good proportion of the tax collections for themselves and sometimes also diverted the forced labour on to their own private estates.

But perhaps the chief suffering of the native people came from their deportation to work in other countries, particularly in Fernando Po. Recruits for these foreign plantations were collected by 'criminal compulsion' and the Report gives wretched accounts of men and boys being rounded up in the villages under terrible threats. Very few who went ever returned.

The man who led this cruel recruitment was the Vice-President of the Republic, a certain Mr. Yancy. Taking advantage of the ignorance of the natives as to what was legal and what illegal, and entirely disregarding their tribal traditions, he sent his soldiers into their villages demanding a certain number of young men for Fernando Po on pain of heavy fines or the burning of their huts. Sometimes a previous shipment had already taken away most of the able men. One such instance of a second call

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for men is thus described by the Paramount Chief of the Wedabo people.

‘The news got out, all the women began to cry. The women said, “What shall we do to get out of this trouble? Not long ago 100 of our sons and husbands died in Fernando Po, now we are called upon the second time to send our sons to Fernando Po, if they go they may all die and may not return to us.” The cry of the women over the country produced a great sadness everywhere so much so that as Paramount Chief I was confused and was unable to eat—my appetite was gone for days.’

Nevertheless Mr. Yancy’s men descended on the tribes, secured the last of the young men for the shipment, drove some of the old men to work on Yancy’s private farm and left the rest to take refuge in the bush.

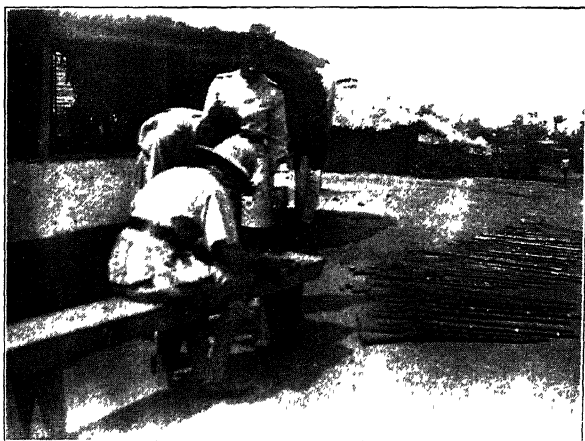
The fear and sadness resulting from events such as these, were found, say the Commissioners, to be registered in the songs of the people. By chance the Commissioners took down on a small phonograph record-apparatus a song that they heard sung in the Wedabo district. When translated it turned out to be:

### *The Sad Song of the Wedabo Women.*

‘We were here when trouble come to our people;  
For this trouble Jeh was imprisoned and fined.  
For this reason Yancy came to our country—  
He caught our husbands and our brothers,  
Sail them to ’Nana Poo  
And there they die!  
And there they die!  
Tell us

(See page 164)

This picture shows the collection of rifles from the dissident tribes. Each rifle, as it was collected, was marked with a serial number which corresponded to the tribesman's name. The rifles were afterwards greased and removed to the capital.



This photograph shows a peace ceremony in progress on the cessation of hostilities between two tribes. The ceremony consists, in the first place, of each of the chiefs filling his mouth with water and spewing it on to the sand in order to typify expulsion of hatred through his heart and stomach. The second stage is the eating of kola nut by each chief off the edge of a knife in the presence



of a neutral tribesman. This part of the ceremony is about to take place. The boy standing on the right in the white shirt is from a neutral tribe and the two chiefs are holding sticks and looking down at the kola nut.

(These photographs are reproduced by kind permission of Dr. MacKenzie)

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Yancy, why?

Yancy, why?

Wedabo women have no husbands,

Yancy, why?

Wedabo women have no brothers,

Yancy, why?

Mothers, fathers, sons have died,

Waiting for the return

Yancy, why?

etc., etc.'

Just before they left a Paramount Chief thus bade farewell to the Commissioners:

'Paramount Chief says he thank you and he says that he is more than glad to see you, but thing for true as you sitting down here, there is a steamer waiting to carry you home. He will express himself but power around him will consume him to-morrow for which he is afraid. . . .

'The Paramount Chief says there is something that troubles his soul. When you go away they will press him down for testifying.

'I have stated what I know. I have got nothing more to say. I ask your behalf when you go away, for Yancy and his officials will punish us. We have got nothing. Yancy says he is going to be President after C. D. B. King.

'Mr. Yancy doing all these things to us hurt us, but one thing he always tell us make us sorry: "When I tell you something you try to cheat, refuse. Have you wings to fly in the air so I can't catch you, or is there anybody above me who can say, no?" This thing make us very sorry.

'I thank you very much. I born in this country in the land of Picanini Cess. As the League of Nations come here now, we going to talk and explain whatever



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is in our hearts, but they are going to kill we again when you leave. . . .

'We thank God there seem to us to be some hope. You are now the one who is confidence of soul and body to rescue them from slavery. Give us protection, else when you come back you will find the country vacant.'

Whether this Paramount Chief of Picanini Cess suffered the reprisals he feared when the Commission had sailed for Europe, it is not possible to discover. But the Report when published put an end to the practices of the notorious Vice-President. In face of the accusations there he was forced to resign his office and President King resigned with him.

The Commissioners not only made their revelations, but they urged a complete reorganization of the republic. It was clear that slavery was a result of a corrupt administration and the Republic, already in serious financial stress, could only survive by drastic remedies.

We need not here go into the details of the proposed reforms; but they were all agreed to by the Liberian Government, including the abolition of the pawn system, the stopping of the shipments to Fernando Po and a new administration of the interior under advisers from more experienced countries.

In 1931 in response to Liberia's appeal for financial and medical assistance the League sent out another Commission under a M. Brunot. The Commission came back to report that all forms of slavery had been banished by the Liberian Government to the best of its ability, but the Commission confirmed its

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predecessor's report of mal-administration. The League Council then asked three of its members to work out a plan for the restoration of the country. There were two great difficulties: first that American business magnates had the Liberian Government so enslaved in debts that their co-operation was necessary for the success of any scheme of reconstruction, and, next, that the Liberian Government became afraid that the country would be losing its dependence by accepting the help of white administrators appointed by the League. It was another example of sensitiveness over 'sovereign rights.'

Then while these difficulties were being wrestled with in Geneva there came suddenly the news of an outbreak of real civil war between the Liberian soldiery and the Kru tribes on the coast. The discontented tribes had rebelled after the departure of the Brunot Commission and the Liberian Frontier Force had ruthlessly burnt out forty villages. The native population, numbering thousands, were now hiding in the bush without houses or adequate food.

There was urgent need of action. The League Council met and made immediate plans. Dr. Mackenzie, a Scotsman who had gone out with the Brunot Commission to advise on matters of health and sanitation, was known to have the interests of Liberia at heart. He was asked to go out at once as a conciliator. There was the question of expense—no small matter in a year when every item of League expenditure was apt to be criticized in a world that was shouting for economy. Somehow the Liberian Government was persuaded to pay the costs when,

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and if, it could find the money. The British Navy lent Dr. Mackenzie H.M.S. *Rochester*, a new sloop, and with a small bodyguard supplied by Sierra Leone, this indomitable servant of the League sailed up and down the Liberian coast, putting ashore in a surf boat to call in turn on each rebellious and warring tribe, persuading them to come out of the bush, to begin rebuilding their houses and to lay down their arms for a year, on the understanding that the soldiers should not molest them and that within the year the white administrators appointed by the League should begin their work. Altogether he collected 500 guns and took them to Monrovia, the capital, where at the time of writing they are carefully stored, each weapon being registered and bearing the owner's name. 'The League Commissioner undertook to ask the government to return a certain number of guns to keep down the bush animals (monkeys, bush-hogs, and elephants) from eating the crops.' He also supervised peace ceremonies between tribes that had taken different sides in the general turmoil. 'At the time of my departure from Monrovia for Geneva,' he wrote, 'official and non-official reports showed that peace had been everywhere established.' So ended with complete success one of the most extraordinary enterprises undertaken by the League.<sup>1</sup>

In the Assembly of 1931, meeting just as Dr. Mackenzie returned from Liberia, the British delegation proposed the re-appointment of a Slavery Commission to keep a look-out, and it was agreed that, in the first place, a Committee of

<sup>1</sup>See special illustrations, p. 160.

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Experts should be appointed for a year to find out how things stood at the moment.

The Committee was duly appointed and it presented its report to the next Assembly. It had found that while open slavery no longer existed there were still a few governments—especially Moslem Kingdoms in Arabia—that had not yet forbidden it by law and that some other States, such as Abyssinia, while prohibiting slavery, were not always able to prevent slave-raiding and slave-trading taking place in parts of the country where their authority was not effective. It was clear too that there were slave ships often in the Red Sea and slave markets in that region. About Liberia the Committee was not requested to report.

In the face of this report the British delegate urged the need of a Permanent Commission on Slavery, to collect information and advise action where necessary. That seemed the only method of gradually removing a practice that was now generally prohibited by governments and carried on only in clandestine fashion. The proposal was in danger of being turned down on the plea of economy, a plea that the British delegation itself had—perhaps in response to the hysterical clamour of some newspapers at home—been urging in other debates. It was, however, finally agreed that the Permanent Slavery Commission should be instituted.

The Commission consists of seven expert persons and it will meet every second year. It is to be helped by a small staff at the Secretariat as other permanent commissions are helped. Its special charge is to hunt down the slave owners and slave traders

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everywhere until the last slaves are discovered and set free. Then the Commission will be disbanded.

There is another anti-slavery campaign of the League which, though it is conducted by a totally different commission, seems to belong to this chapter. This is the attack on the international traffic in women and children. We shall conclude with some account of it.

Those whose memories go back to pre-War days will remember the disturbing headlines and dark hints that led the credulous to believe that no woman should travel in a railway compartment without the company of her own sex, and that even on the top of a bus she might be doped and kidnapped. These suspicions, greatly encouraged by the highly imaginative novelette that portrayed the haunts of vice in foreign parts, put a smoke screen between sober people and the truth. They were so obviously exaggerated that they led many to suppose that the traffic, if it existed at all, was too inconsiderable for their concern. Moreover, the War for a while became the best selling news and now murder seems to be a more popular theme in fiction than the so-called white slave traffic. The traffic, in fact, has been largely forgotten.

Nevertheless, the authors of the League Covenant thought it necessary to make the suppression of this trade one of the special tasks of the League.<sup>1</sup> Thirteen nations, in pre-War days had already signed a convention binding themselves to punish traffickers. But like some other pre-War international

<sup>1</sup>See Article 23 of the Covenant.

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conventions, it had been partly ineffective for lack of any central responsible authority. The League now supplied this and those interested in this matter hoped the work would proceed apace.

In the second year of its existence the League called a conference of thirty-four nations. A new convention was made and an Advisory Committee on Traffic in Women and Children was set up. Like the Permanent Slavery Commission, referred to above, its business was to search out the culprits. And it is important to remember that, in this case, the culprits in question are those who trade *internationally*. With national problems of prostitution the Committee was not asked to concern itself.

One of the first proposals of the Advisory Committee was that a few experts should go into the under-worlds of different countries in Europe and America and discover to what extent women were persuaded or deceived into leaving their own countries in order to become prostitutes abroad; what kind of women and girls formed this human merchandise; and what kind of people traded in them. The Council, agreeing, in 1924 a number of trained social workers began to proceed like detectives to places where they suspected that the traffickers operated. They got into touch with both the traffickers themselves and the girls and women who had been transported from other countries. In 1927 they published their report, which was startling.

‘No complete figures are available,’ they said, ‘but reliable information has been obtained from certain countries which justifies the belief that a traffic of considerable dimensions is being carried on. Many

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hundreds of women and girls—some of them very young—are transported each year from one country to another for purposes of prostitution.’

Some of the younger girls had not originally been prostitutes at all, coming usually from poor homes they thought they had found a rich husband or lover with whom they were to travel. To quote an example from the Report:

‘4-P went to Warsaw, married and took away the girl (7-G), and after some persuasion induced her to enter a house of prostitution. In two years the man saved nearly 3,000 American dollars.’

Girls like this anonymous victim are the most pitiable, being entirely duped; but the investigators found that all those transported, including those who expected, or perhaps were already hardened to, the prostitute’s life were deserving of pity. ‘The prostitute,’ they say, in their Report, ‘has also her claim to protection from open and shameless exploitation.’ For this was the harsh fact that the report revealed—this exploitation by agents, and *souteneurs*. These people pretended to offer the women employment, or marriage, or love, or profitable prostitution, but on whatever pretext they secured them their own object was always to enslave them in prostitution and make a profit for themselves.

‘Profit is at the bottom of the business.’

says the Report; and again:

‘Traffic in women is a sinister business in which the persons carrying it on seek cynically to supply a demand with the greatest possible gain to themselves.’

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Once the woman is abroad she is entirely in the hands of whoever has procured her. She is probably already in debt to the extent of her travelling expenses; she is often forced to pay extravagant prices for her board and lodging; she is compelled to earn all she can and give up most of her earnings; and being in a foreign land where she may not even understand the language, she has no means of escape, no source of help. The example quoted above shows how easily the money is made by those who have no scruples about engaging in the trade. The Report is stocked with similar illustrations. For instance a trafficker in Buenos Aires told an investigator:

‘When I first came here I had a hard time . . . three years ago I got hold of a good proposition. My wife managed the house, and in fourteen months I made sixty thousand pesos. I invested what I made in several other houses, and now I have a steady income.’

Another advised an investigator thus:

‘Strike out for Panama. The fleet is expected there during January and February. Things in Panama and Colon will be great.’

And the soundness of this was corroborated by the statement of another *souteneur* who said:

‘I was in Panama last year while the fleet was there and I took \$4,000 out of the city in a few months.’

A few years later a second investigation was made into the trade in the East and its report is before the Advisory Committee at the present time.

All the discoveries of the Advisory Committee



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are studied with considerable interest by the Assembly, as are also the Committee's recommendations. As a result governments have adopted more vigilant measures for capturing traffickers; the licensed house (found by the Committee to be a great incentive to the trade and indirectly much criticized in the Report) has latterly been prohibited from several countries; women police have been increasingly used; the age of consent has in some countries been raised, and the public have been stirred to sympathy and action. But the best testimony to the success of the Committee's work comes perhaps from one of the traffickers themselves, who meeting one of the League investigators and not knowing his mission confided in him that the League was taking the matter up and implied that there was therefore not much future for the business.

Closely associated with the Committee whose work we have glanced at in these few pages is the League's Committee on Child Welfare. Since every child, by reason of its age, is in a sense the property of its parents or guardians it will not be amiss in this final paragraph on slavery to notice that, through this second Committee, the organized world is achieving a better standard of care for its population under fourteen. The Committee has been concerned with blind children, illegitimate children, criminal children, children at work. It pleads for a reasonable school-leaving age, for Juvenile Courts, for hygienic cinemas, for good films, for a happy and healthy social environment, for playing fields and swimming baths.

## WHERE ARE THE SLAVES?

### FOR FURTHER READING

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## CHAPTER IX

### FOR THE RELIEF OF OPPRESSION

#### *I. Political (Minorities)*

FROM earliest times wars have usually resulted in numbers of ordinary people finding themselves suddenly compelled to live under foreign rule. So it was after the Great War. The Allied Powers, as victors, liberated many communities but they brought others under alien rule. New States were created, or re-created, and other States were enlarged. Consequently some twenty-five to thirty millions of people in all, although living still where they had always lived, became citizens of new States. Thus, for example, there were Germans and Ukrainians transferred to the restored Poland, Austrians transferred to Italy, Germans to France, Bulgarians to Greece.

The anxiety of all these people was as to whether they would be oppressed by their new rulers. They were concerned not only for their material property but also for their racial and spiritual endowments. Language, religion, national culture, traditional songs and customs—these are things which people cherish instinctively. In the course of progress they may change or disappear, but if an alien government tries to destroy them, people will want to fight to save them.

How is the League of Nations concerned with this problem?

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When, by the Peace treaties, some European countries were enlarged at the expense of others the well-being of the populations transferred with the land they lived on was supposed to be safeguarded by various Minority Treaties and Declarations. Thus countries such as Poland, France, Italy, Rumania, Jugo-Slavia, Czechoslovakia, and Greece undertook that the minorities under their rule should be free to keep their own culture, to speak their own language, to have their own schools and colleges, to follow their own religion, and that they should enjoy equal rights of citizenship with all the other inhabitants of the country to which they were transferred. This undertaking was in some cases given with reluctance, as the governments concerned had no desire to have other governments prying into their internal affairs, but when the Council of the League of Nations was made the trustee for these minorities, their guardian and court of appeal, both the governments and the minorities who must live under them were more contented. Here at least was a body of men representing the world and therefore presumably impartial. They would have no advantage to gain in either listening to complaints or in ignoring them. It was agreed, therefore, that if a government seemed to be failing in its guarantees to its minority population then individuals or groups of people among the minority were free to petition the League. The petition must not be a vague complaint but must deal with such matters as were contained in the minority treaties and declarations; it was to be properly signed by whoever sent it; and it must not be expressed in abusive language.

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More than two hundred petitions fulfilling these conditions and thus declared 'receivable' have come to Geneva from various distressed places in Europe. The Secretary-General has examined them, sent them to the government concerned for its comments and then brought them before 'the Committee of Three.' This consists of the Chairman of the Council and two other Council members, but none of these three must be a delegate from a country which has any interest in the dispute. The Committee may, or may not, bring the petitions afterwards to a full meeting of the Council.

As a result of this arrangement certain injustices have been set right: for instance, four girls imprisoned by the Roumanian Government were freed as the result of a petition from the National Association of Hungarian Women; the Polish Government was asked by the Council to open a certain elementary school for children of the German minority; some thousands of Germans who were being ordered out of Poland were either compensated or allowed to remain—in this last case the Council referring the matter to the International Court of Justice.

Nevertheless, if our more reliable newspapers speak with authority these are mere drops in the ocean and the injustice suffered by millions of oppressed people in different parts of Europe continues with little interference. How absolutely a minority may be hounded down is manifest as I write these words by the newspaper reports of the civil excommunication of Jews in Germany. But Germany has not signed a Minority Treaty in

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protection of her Jewish Minority and the worst rumours of unofficial persecution there produce a story of less cruelty than that of Poland's dealings with the Ukrainians, a minority for whom she has promised all the rights already mentioned.

The Ukrainians in Poland are mostly peasants. They are a people particularly rich in folk-lore and with a very strong religious feeling. Their religion and folk-tradition are intertwined so that some of the carols they sing at Christmas are really traditional songs that go back to pre-Christian times. This folk-lore is still a live and growing thing and it assimilates the present experiences of the peasants, so that they will sing at Christmas, not only:

‘Rejoice, O World, for the Son of God is born.’  
but also

‘Christ has come—He has come, bringing Freedom  
to the Ukraine.’  
and

‘New Joy has come. Give many years of life to  
England.’

This surprising reference to a country that one might suppose to be nothing but a name to them is really a tribute to a British delegate's efforts on their behalf on the Council of the League. When Mr. Arthur Henderson took up their cause at Geneva, the news got back to these peasants who are keenly interested in the affairs of the world. His name became familiar in remote villages and from that time they put their faith in the British delegation at Geneva.

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But what are their complaints? A Correspondent to the *Manchester Guardian* in February 1933, wrote as follows:

‘The “Polonization” of the Ukraine—that is to say, the attempt to destroy Ukrainian and replace it by Polish civilization not only throughout the land but in the minds of the Ukrainian people—is efficiently organized (the inefficiency of the Poles is a German myth). Pressure varying from the extremest forms of physical and mental torment to obstruction, petty injustice, and chicanery is applied to a population of millions (the Poles say there are five and a half million Ukrainians, the Ukrainians themselves claim to number seven million) in such a way that there is hardly an individual who remains unaffected. This pressure grows more and more intolerable year by year.

‘Arrest and detention are so common that they pass almost unnoticed. Any Ukrainian peasant lad may be arrested, beaten, detained for months without a trial, be discharged without even an explanation, or be tried and sentenced to years of imprisonment or death on fictitious evidence given by suborned witnesses or wrung from himself by torture. Such a fate belongs to the commonplaces of everyday life in the Ukrainian village.’

He goes on to explain the tortures that are applied. Sometimes the prisoners are beaten on the soles of the feet, a form of castigation that has the double advantage of being excessively painful without leaving lasting scars. Sometimes they are gagged and water poured into their nostrils so that they experience the effects of drowning. Sometimes they are placed in solitary confinement without exercise or occupation, and subjected to long cross-

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examination whenever they try to sleep. The result of this is complete nervous breakdown.

'In Lemberg recently a prisoner of iron constitution and great strength of character underwent this treatment for ten days. On the eleventh day his family were allowed to visit him and found him weeping hysterically.'

In a later article the Correspondent described how the co-operative movement in the Ukrainian villages is being attacked, one pretext or another being produced for closing the shops. One manager who appealed to the legal authorities was thus dismissed:

'Go to Geneva—they'll reopen your shop for you; we won't.'

And so the patient peasants wait until the Council takes action. Over a year has passed since the first 'receivable' petition from the Ukraine was considered by the Council. The Council did not take any serious steps. One wonders why? Undoubtedly it was anxious not to make things worse for the Ukrainians than before. And perhaps the Polish delegate was able to persuade his colleagues that the complaints were exaggerated. It seems that the League Council may be too afraid to encroach on a country's 'sovereign rights,' when these minority questions come before it. Yet it has been made the 'guarantor' for these populations. Backed by sufficient public opinion, it could fulfil the hopes of the Ukrainian peasantry.

Other serious complaints come from the Balkans, where Bulgarians and Turks suffer under the governments of Jugo-Slavia, Roumania and



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Greece. Here are some extracts from a petition received recently by the Secretary-General:

On the western frontiers of Bulgaria the Treaty cut off large tracts of purely Bulgarian land, to give Serbia the strategic command. This was done without any regard to the population inhabiting these districts, and in many cases villages have separated from their fields: in certain cases the line bisects the village itself. To work their fields the peasants have to cross the frontier, and from this fact innumerable incidents have arisen, all too often ending in the murder of the peasant. The Serbian Government has now closed the frontier for six months from the beginning of October: the peasants are therefore cut off from their fields, and as this is the season for sowing them they are virtually being deprived of their living. . . .

The story from Serbian Macedonia is very similar, and the list of atrocities perpetrated on the population, since the occupation by Serbia, far surpass anything that happened during the Turkish regime. Let it suffice to remind you of the massacre at Garvan of twenty-eight men and boys, called in from their work in the fields, by the machine-guns of the Jupan Matcovitch, on the pretext that they were Comitajis. . . . But for calculated inhumanity the following incident must take pride of place: In 1929 a virulent epidemic of diphtheria broke out in the village round Tsarevo Selo and Kotchani: all the children were affected. The Serbian authorities forbade all doctors to treat them: the suffering and mortality were appalling. As an instance I may mention the case of the Mayor of a village near Kotchani: he had five children. Four of them died, and in a desperate hope to save the life of the fifth he carried it to Kotchani. He was turned back by the police and not allowed to have his child treated: the child died and

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the unhappy man is now in Bulgaria. This is a typical case, and in several villages there was not one child left. In spite of repeated requests for help, no doctors, no remedies were permitted to be sent. In one village of twenty-five houses, Jamenitsa, *not one soul* survived.

Thus does the excessive nationalism, left behind by the War, express itself, trying to crush rather than assimilate the new blood that might have increased a nation's vitality.

It has been suggested by those who have studied the Minority Question that what is most needed now is an International Commission of Enquiry appointed by the League to investigate the working of all the Minority Treaties in Europe. If sufficient public opinion were aroused, such an Enquiry might be pressed by some Assembly delegate. One cannot, in this connection, but regret the inopportune death of Dr. Nansen so early in the life of the League. This is just such a cause as he would have championed, regardless of 'sovereign rights' and natural sensibilities and without waiting for public opinion to back him.

## FOR FURTHER READING

Mair, L. P.: *The Protection of Minorities*, Christophers, 1928.  
"Minorities," League of Nations Union pamphlet, 1930.

## THE LEAGUE IN OUR TIME

### *II. Economic (the World Economic Conference)*

In the first part of this chapter we have drawn attention to forms of political oppression that have so far been commonly overlooked; but the economic oppression of which we now have to speak stares everyone in the face. Take up a newspaper and you see pictures of food queues in New York or Berlin, an announcement that a notable company has passed its dividends, a headline, perhaps, of a bank-failure; and, at the foot of the page, the familiar short paragraph about a working man who has committed suicide.

‘Witness said, that deceased had been out of work for a long time and had seemed very depressed. The Jury returned a verdict of suicide whilst of unsound mind.’

The number of people out of work in the world is between thirty and forty million; in the streets of any town you may meet some of them: selling matches, drawing on the pavement, playing musical instruments, queueing up outside a Labour Exchange or standing listlessly at street corners. Everyone has felt the pinch but there is no question that it is the people who live always near the poverty line who feel it most. For them it means inadequate food and clothing, rent in arrears, and a despair that drains the life from a man, so that presently he is not only unemployed but unemployable.

But according to the warning of a group of experts to be spoken of later, this is nothing to what we must expect if certain measures are not very soon adopted.

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When the League of Nations was founded there was no thought of an economic breakdown and in the first few years after the War the world recovered itself so quickly that by 1925 it was, as a whole, more prosperous than in 1913. To this prosperity the League had made a contribution, for in the first years of its existence it had prevented the complete bankruptcy of Austria and Hungary. If these countries had collapsed, naturally, other countries would have suffered in consequence and so the loans raised on the League's own security (as in the single case of Austria) or on the advice of League experts, were in everybody's interest.

However, the crisis did not come upon us completely without warning. In the perpetual clamour about the payment of reparations and war debts, economists raised their voices in continual criticism. The Economic and Financial section of the Secretariat refrained from comment or action in these matters because all these war payments were, from the beginning, placed outside the work of the League. But the section did organize two Conferences, one on Finance in 1920, and one on Economic Questions in 1927. This last Conference was attended by business men and economists from many different countries and its unanimous opinion was against the increasing tariffs that were mounting round nearly every country. It warned the world that this was dangerous, but few countries were willing to take any steps.

Then in 1929 the collapse of trade and money became evident. The general dismay and bewilderment was aggravated by the knowledge that there

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was no shortage of anything. It was not a case of world supplies failing to keep up with world requirements. On the contrary the supplies were excessive, so that farmers were burning their wheat, coffee growers using coffee for engine fuel, and rubber planters discussing the use of an insect pest to limit their crops.

Obviously the first necessity was to understand the situation. This the Economic Section of the Secretariat set out to do. It brought the best minds to work on the chaos and published a report which is a scientific examination of the state of the world to-day.<sup>1</sup>

The report pointed out that in the modern world with its fierce competition to meet demands there is periodically a condition of over-production leading to a general slowing down, a depression. So does the trade cycle move. The present experience is one of these trade depressions very much exaggerated by unusual factors. Ordinarily a depression will right itself, the stimulus returning when production has slowed down sufficiently. But this time the automatic recovery is not happening. This is due to the new factors which weigh down the depression. Three of these factors that can readily be understood are excessive war payments, excessive tariffs, and falling prices.

Obviously, if countries have to pay each other enormous sums of money the transfer of these sums will interfere with the normal working of trade and money. These sums have largely been paid in gold,

<sup>1</sup>*The World Economic Survey*. A study of the chief facts in the present world crisis. Allen and Unwin, 6s., 1932.

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"PHEW! THAT'S A NASTY LEAK. THANK GOODNESS IT'S NOT OUR END OF THE BOAT."

Cartoon by Low in the *Evening Standard*.

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and a certain proportion of gold stands behind the paper money which every country uses. The payments have resulted in some countries having too little gold and others much too much.

The mounting tariffs are similarly a result of the War. The peace was only a cessation of hostilities; it was in no sense a recovery of mutual confidence—not even as much confidence as there had been before the War. Each country therefore wanted to be self-sufficient, and with this end she raised tremendous tariff barriers to keep out the goods of other countries. But if countries must not sell to her where were they to get the money to buy from her? Thus trade, which is exchange of goods, inevitably declined. And the more the general depression became apparent the higher went the trade barriers; for there is always a temptation to try to cure an ailment by a local application. It seems an obvious way.

Falling prices were again indirectly the result of war. In the first years of peace there was tremendous incentive to increase the production of food stuffs and of such things as coal, cotton, and rubber. There were markets to capture and anyone who came into the race had a chance of capturing them. There were consequently many new competitors. Moreover, all kinds of scientific means for increasing production had been discovered. The net result was that the amount of things produced was greatly in excess of the ability of the world to buy, and when there are many sellers and few buyers prices drop. They have now dropped so far that they do not cover the cost of production. It is

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becoming not worth while to the farmer to grow corn, or to the coal owner to produce coal, or to the rubber planter to produce rubber. And the national income steadily drops.

A quite different factor which prevents automatic recovery is the new standard of life which most civilized countries now have accepted for their working people, and this they are unwilling or unable (owing to the opposition of the workers) to forego. Thus, when automatic recovery would require wages and social expenditure to go down, wages only sink a little and expenditure on unemployment, on public health, on education remains much the same.

The outstanding character of the crisis is lack of confidence. Once the pendulum of trade swung mechanically. Now it has been arrested by the jolt of war and remains at the bad end. Lack of confidence feeds on itself and there is a general reluctance to invest or to set up business anywhere. Everyone is waiting for someone to lead. This is where the League steps in.

The Assembly of 1932 depressed as it was by Disarmament difficulties, the dispute in the Far East, and the general feeling of despair in the world, had yet enough initiative to decide on calling an Economic Conference to which the whole world should be invited. One happy thing had unexpectedly happened in the past twelve months: German reparations had been killed for ever (it was hoped) by the Lausanne Conference.

The World Conference was to meet in London as soon as possible and in the meantime a Prepara-



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tory Committee should draw up an agenda. While everyone's attention was directed to the collapse of the American banks and Hitler's success in Germany, there gathered together unobtrusively at Geneva a very distinguished company of twenty or more financial and economic experts, drawn from fourteen different countries. While the actual date of the Conference was postponed owing to the presidential election in America, these gentlemen produced an agenda and guide for the Conference when it should meet.

The matters to be discussed by the Conference were, as might be expected: money and credit; falling prices; movements of capital; restrictions on trade. Into the details of the possible remedies put forward we cannot go—they are necessarily technical. But the general policy that includes them all and that is heavily stressed by the Preparatory Committee is one of energetic co-operation and 'economic disarmament.' The members of the Preparatory Committee point out in their introduction to the agenda that, inasmuch as each country is trying to be self-sufficient in a world of mutual dependence, it is making for a disaster far worse than we have yet realized.

'Failure in this critical undertaking threatens a world-wide adoption of ideals of national self sufficiency which cut unmistakably athwart the lines of economic development. Such a choice would shake the whole system of international finance to its foundations, standards of living would be lowered, and the social system as we know it could hardly survive. These developments, if they occur, will be the result, not of

CONFERENCE TO DECIDE WHETHER EVERYONE SHALL PULL TOGETHER.

*Cartoon by Low in the Evening Standard.*

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an inevitable natural law, but of the failure of human will and intelligence. . . . The responsibility of Governments is clear and inescapable.'

And these words do not come from demagogues or excited journalists, but are the unanimous declaration of a Committee chiefly composed of Bank Directors, Economists and Ministers of State.<sup>1</sup>

## FOR FURTHER READING

Salter, A.: *Recovery*, Bell, 1932.

<sup>1</sup> While this book has been going through the press the Conference has met and decided to adjourn after sitting for a few weeks. The special difficulties of the United States and her President's plan for meeting them made that country unable to agree to the proposals for stabilizing currencies. Also, there was a strong divergence between the gold standard and non-gold standard countries. However, the adjournment by no means spells final failure.

## CHAPTER X

### TOWARDS ENLIGHTENMENT

‘IT would be unthinkable,’ argued M. Leon Bourgeois addressing the League Council at one of its early meetings, ‘it would be unthinkable that the League should endeavour to improve the means of exchange of national products without also endeavouring to facilitate the exchange of ideas.’ Then, with all the force of French rhetoric he painted a picture of a world in which the intellectuals and the artists were a great fraternity, where professors of different universities might temporarily exchange their Chairs, where students from Berlin or Oxford or Prague could spend a term in Paris or Warsaw or Stockholm, where the degrees and diplomas of one country would be recognized by the universities of every other, where philosophers and scientists and artists would be able to communicate with one another regardless of frontiers and nationalities.

This idea of ‘intellectual co-operation’ had been spoken of when the Covenant was being planned in Paris in 1919. The Belgian prime minister had wanted it included in the Covenant, but most of the statesmen were not quite sure what intellectual co-operation meant. It seemed to be rather a decoration than a vital part of the new organization, and so it was omitted.

At the first Assembly the proposal came forward

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again. That there was no article in the Covenant to prescribe this piece of work as a duty did not put it outside the scope of the League. The League was formed to promote international co-operation and, indeed, most of its early work was not laid down in the Covenant—the repatriation of prisoners of war and refugees, the disinfecting of typhus areas in Central Europe, the raising of loans. The Assembly after some discussion passed the idea on to the Council and there M. Bourgeois, with his picture of a Utopia for the *intelligentsia*, persuaded his colleagues to agree to the formation of a League Committee—a small committee, for this was not to be an expensive luxury—which would make out a programme whereby intellectual co-operation might be achieved.

Thus it came about that in August 1922 there met in one of the rooms at the Secretariat a Committee of unusual and striking composition. There was an Indian who was a Professor of Political Economy at Calcutta. There was a Norwegian lady who was a distinguished Zoologist. There was the American Director of the Mount Wilson Observatory. There was the Professor of Greek Philology at Oxford. There were other professors from Berne, Brussels, Turin, Berlin, Madrid, and Paris, including Madame Curie-Sklodowska, famous for her discovery of radium, and M. Bergson, the distinguished philosopher: Professor Einstein was also among the list of names but he was not present until a later meeting.

M. Bergson, being voted into the Chair, opened the meeting with a welcome and a warning. He welcomed this gathering of representative intellec-

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tuals to the work they had come to undertake, and he warned them of the great need to save civilization. He pointed out how slowly and almost imperceptibly a civilization begins to decay. All over Europe, he said, there were cries that this civilization was threatened. They must arrest the decay.

Then from the mass of proposals sent by outside enthusiasts or brought by members of the Committee themselves they proceeded to make out a programme. They would undertake the organization of bibliography, a piece of work that badly wanted doing. They would find means of enabling scientists to communicate their theories and discoveries to each other more quickly. They would make plans for University exchanges. (And here one member pleaded that one day the Committee would consider a proposal for the founding of an International University to which all students might go for a two terms' course after obtaining their degrees.) They would work for the protection of patents and copyrights. They would do something presently about the Press—and on this point Professor Gilbert Murray presented a report showing how inadequate are the means by which one country learns about another. But first and foremost the Committee would do something practical for poor students who were suffering privations as the result of the War. There were rumours that in Vienna and Berlin, and Moscow especially, professors and students lacked not only books but the mere necessities of life. A questionnaire would be sent to European countries asking for information about the conditions under which student life

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existed at that moment. Then an appeal would be raised.

A small section of the Secretariat had been formed to help the Committee and by this means the questionnaire was duly sent out. When later the appeal was made in the Committee's name, there were generous gifts in money and clothes and books forthcoming for the distressed intellectuals.

The report in which the Committee gives an account to the Council of its first meeting and its initial programme ends with the information that three small sub-committees have been formed to supervise the work undertaken and to avoid the too frequently calling together of the full Committee. This, the report points out, will be a saving of expense. The note of apology here is significant. The Assembly was unwilling to vote more than a very small sum for this department of its work, doubting that anything valuable could be done in this direction.

The Committee, meantime, was finding more work to be done than it could get round. Such co-operation as had existed before had been slight. Teachers and doctors and scientists had had their international gatherings but these had been interrupted by the War. It seemed that the intellectual life of the world had been surprisingly confined by national barriers.

Now a mass of proposals quite overwhelmed the Committee. There was the cinema: could it not be directed by international effort to more educational and artistic purposes? There were museums and libraries: how little one country knew about another's treasures—might not collaboration here be fruitful?

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There was the radio, a new power to educate and influence public opinion: surely it was important to make it a means of real enlightenment? There were also all kinds of barriers to be gradually removed to enable scientists to follow each other's methods and classifications and technique, as well as other barriers keeping the universities of the world all too separate, one from another. And then there was the question of education. Surely the supreme task of the I.C.I.C., as it came to be called, was to permeate the schools and universities of the world with the new international spirit? And here we come to that part of its work which has been inspired with more eagerness than any other. We shall return to it presently.

And so the I.C.I.C. had more work to do than it had time or money to accomplish. It came to be called the Cinderella of the League. Unlike Cinderella, however, it did not sit down in self-commiseration. It appealed for help. If the League Assembly did not feel justified in voting it more money, would any individual country or any private persons come to their aid?

France just then had a new government, enthusiastic for the League and yet truly French in its ardour for the intellectual life. It offered the I.C.I.C. a home in the *Palais Royal* and a generous annual income. The offer was accepted, approved by the Council and the Assembly, and the little section at the Secretariat was now able to hand over a great part of the mass of work before it to the permanent staff of the Institute of Intellectual Co-operation in Paris. The I.C.I.C. henceforth had a double name



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and significance. Besides being the League's Committee it was also the Governing Body of the Institute, but when it served in this second capacity a French member of the Committee always took the chair.

Now the I.C.I.C. could go ahead, for it had not only been given a palace but a new income also. Sub-committees could be set up without apology and experts from all over the world could be called in to help. Moreover, every country must be asked to link up with the I.C.I.C. by forming its own *National* Committee on Intellectual Co-operation. There would then be continual intercourse between the National Committees and the International Committee. Thus countries would carry out the purposes of the I.C.I.C. and at the same time make new suggestions without anyone waiting more than they must for the lethargic movements of legislation and the approval of harassed governments.

The generosity of France was followed by the generosity of Italy who gave the Committee two institutes in Rome: the International Institute for the Unification of Private International Law and the International Educational Cinematograph Institute. Through this last the I.C.I.C. hopes to influence the development of cinematography as a means of education and a form of art. At the present time it has a plan for using the films to spread understanding of the League.

In the very beginning of its history Professor Bergson had begged the Committee to work for practical ends and to withstand the temptation to deliver 'high sounding aphorisms.' It has faithfully followed this lead. A desire for clarity of purpose

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and method in working for it appears in all the reports and minutes that record the Committee's work. In 1929 after seven years of practical experiment it decided that it must define its aims and methods to the League and the world. It therefore produced a document in which this is done. Its general aim, it said, was the promotion of progress and civilization. It wished also to create an atmosphere in which peaceful settlement would be the favoured way of settling international disputes. To achieve its purpose it would do all it could to effect personal contacts and the exchange of ideas between the intellectual workers of all countries; it would seek for means by which the art and science of each country spread to other countries; it would arrange for joint international discussions on important problems; it would encourage institutes and universities in every country to get into touch with like institutions in other parts of the world; it would champion the rights of inventors, artists, and writers. It would try to make sure that the younger generation should understand the League of Nations and the new international spirit. It would not encroach on existing societies. Where others were doing the work the I.C.I.C. would not intervene; but it would step in wherever work wanted doing.

It would be the worst possible mistake to think that this co-operation in the intellectual life of the world is in any way working for uniformity. Quite the reverse is the case. Just as the political and humanitarian co-operation of nations depends for its life on vigour, on different national traditions

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and different spiritual qualities, so does the I.C.I.C. work for the enrichment of each country's culture by more intellectual communication. An illustration of this may be found in the Committee's recent mission to China to which country, in response to an appeal for advice, several eminent educationists were lately sent. The mission reported that in the organization of China's educational system it was imperative that China should not superimpose a new set of ideas on her own age-long civilization but find the best in her old culture and adapt it to the needs of modern life. In the same spirit and as part of the same plan new educationists from China have been touring the great educational centres of the world.

But while this civilizing work proceeds apace the old habit of war is by no means yet overcome. H. G. Wells once remarked that we are engaged in a race between education and catastrophe, and it is by no means certain that the work of the I.C.I.C. in bringing together the thinkers of the world will not be shattered by a new world war. In the interests of civilization and humanity, therefore, the Committee is looking for all possible ways by which the younger generation may be led to regard 'international co-operation as the normal method of conducting world affairs.'

In 1926 the I.C.I.C. collected a Committee of Experts and asked them to recommend what could best be done to achieve this end. The Committee was entirely composed of people engaged in educational work either as directors or teachers. They gave practical advice. They begged that all governments should see that school children were taught

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about the League of Nations in their history and geography and civics lessons. They suggested that governments should, as an early Assembly had once recommended, 'grant all possible facilities for travel by land or by water' to students and school children, boy scouts and girl guides, coming from other countries into theirs. They asked examiners to put questions on the League in suitable examination papers. They asked training colleges to make a knowledge of the League part of the equipment of teachers. They recommended the use of films, international correspondence, essay competitions, pageants, plays and festivals as other ways of presenting the League to children. They encouraged the work of all unofficial societies that were befriending children or definitely working for peace. They asked that special books on the League for the use of teachers should be prepared in every country.<sup>1</sup> They recommended the expurgation of the old text books with their prejudiced points of view.

The Report was circulated throughout the states members of the League and both governments and national committees wrote back to the I.C.I.C. informing it as to what was already being done in their own country and what more it was proposed to do. Some countries responded more than others, but the general result showed that the new spirit was stirring. Particularly the plea for fairer text books was well received and some countries are hastening to banish from their schools, as out of date, those

<sup>1</sup>The book prepared at the request of the British National Committee for International Co-operation is *The League in Theory and Practice*, by C. K. Webster and Sidney Herbert.

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prejudiced histories that made the child's own country the hero of the story and the other countries either treacherous villains, or doubtful friends.

So the work of the I.C.I.C. and its outposts throughout the world proceeds not by legislation and ordinance but by reason and persuasion. Its work is part of the great work of moral disarmament. It runs the race against catastrophe. But it is a relay race and the flag is even now being handed to those for whom catastrophe is merely hearsay.

### FOR FURTHER READING

Zimmern: *Learning and Leadership*. Oxford Univ. Press.

*Teachers and World Peace*. League of Nations Union Pamphlet, 1929, 6d.

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AND so in the year 1933 we find all manner of things happening that would have seemed almost Utopian twenty years ago. Every September there is what has been called the "journey of the nations" to Geneva. Every few months fourteen statesmen from fourteen different countries meet to consider the world's affairs. During most of the year fifteen of the world's distinguished judges sit at The Hague dispensing justice between one country and another. Regularly the League's Commissions, Committees and sub-committees meet at Geneva or elsewhere to examine the Mandatory Powers on their trusteeship over backward peoples, to continue the campaigns against drugs and slavery, the exploitation of women, the malignancy of disease. All over the world at this moment are men and women working alone or in groups as servants of the League. And in their respective offices at Geneva the international staffs of the Secretariat and the I.L.O. tabulate figures and facts, prepare agendas, send out questionnaires, receive petitions, circulate information, make translations, work out statistics, keep in regular communication with every country in the world, and themselves present a new and surprising spectacle of daily international collaboration.

In thirteen years all this machinery for peace and for human well-being has not only been established,

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"THE OLYMPIC GAMES" (CAN YOUTH WIN THE RACE?)

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but it has accomplished so much that the process of international co-operation to-day compares with the tentative and occasional pre-war efforts as the latest modern car compares with the first horse-bus. Look around the world and you see everywhere evidence that the thing is working. Here is an eastern port with a better health record than it ever had ; there are slaves being freed under new legislation in Abyssinia ; in an Egyptian prison illicit drug traffickers begin to wonder if their game is up ; in Syria, Arabs and French administrators discuss how soon Syria shall follow Iraq into freedom ; in Persia children of six no longer work in carpet factories ; in Liberia there are no more human pawns ; in China are new hospitals and new schools ; and in every country in the world the new point of view, the international point of view, gains acceptance.

But it is not enough. When it comes up against powerful economic interests or a strong traditional prejudice the League machinery is unreliable. Thus, in spite of the fact that the existence of the League has made it possible to summon two World Conferences within two years the one has been at a stand-still for eighteen months because the old idea that armaments bring security is still vigorous and is heartily backed by armament manufacturers ; and who dare believe that the other, the World Economic Conference, will do much more than take us very tentatively forward towards economic collaboration, faced as it is with old prejudice and big business ? Similarly neither League Council nor Assembly could alter Japan's policy in Man-



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churia. All they could do—and this, indeed, was something unprecedented—was to localize the dispute and tell Japan by a roll call of the nations that they found her in the wrong.

Is it the fault of the League of Nations that we have only this limited success to show? It is the fashion nowadays to blame the League. The people who have never believed in the League blame it, scoffingly, for not doing the things that they never wanted or expected it to do. The people who have believed in the League blame it for not fulfilling their hopes.

You cannot answer the question whether the League is to blame until you first decide what you mean by the League. If you mean the machinery, the charge seems unjust. The system laid down in the Covenant for settling disputes has worked in some sixty-five cases,<sup>1</sup> and the World Conference summoned by the Assembly to reduce and limit Armaments had before it a draft treaty prepared by an expert international committee—it had only to fill in the figures. One cannot lay all the blame on the machinery.

Are then the Assembly and the Council to be found guilty? Is it one or both of these that is meant by 'the League'? This seems more just. The Council hesitated when Japan defied it, and neither Assembly nor Council have given a lead in the matter of Disarmament. Yet neither Assembly nor Council are composed of independent persons. They represent the governments who send them to Geneva,

<sup>1</sup> Twenty-five settlements by the Council and forty judgments or advisory opinions by the International Court of Justice.

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and governments everywhere are guided consciously and unconsciously by the most powerful opinions behind them. The majority of people in every country are indifferent and sceptical about the League. Could any kind of opinion on the League be more paralysing for those who have to work the machine than this dead weight of yawning ignorance and languid disbelief?

Truly the League of Nations is to blame for its tragic failures, if when we say 'the League,' we understand that the League is composed of fifty-seven countries and is like a machine on low power if the nations do not will that it shall work.

If the situation is properly understood it is not the League's limitations that appear remarkable, but its achievements. The League was, perhaps, a premature birth, hastened by the shock of the Great War. But there were some ready for it. You can pick them out at an Assembly; they stand out distinctly as you read the minutes of Commissioners; you meet them, convinced and indefatigable, at the Secretariat, and you find them among the ordinary people at home. It is these internationally minded people who have got the League thus far. They are not fanatics. There is nothing peculiar about them. They have accepted the League principle as a matter of course, and if they work unduly hard or earnestly preach what they practise it is only because they are discomfited by so much apathy, so much tenacious clinging to insular opinion in a world that has stumbled unawares into complete inter-dependence.

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Naturally they are discomfited, for the international system has no certainty of success. It may gradually crumble away to be finally dissolved by another world war. The imminent danger of this they alone see.

Except for armament firms and a few people who still believe that it is somehow manly to mow down human beings with tanks or choke them with gas, hardly anyone wants war. But most are unwilling to fight for peace. Yet anyone can fight for peace as surely as in the Great War everyone could do some form of war work. To fight for peace is to accept the international idea for yourself and then pass it on. The danger is in a superficial acceptance. I have met many people who are interested in the League and think they support it, but if they are asked what they would do if their country went to war they say—in a tone of voice which makes blind instinct sound like virtue—that they would, of course, stand by their country. Someone asks: 'Suppose your country were in the wrong?' No matter, when it came to the point, they would stand by her, right or wrong.

This is not patriotism; it is sentimentalism. You do not make your country glorious by shouting *Rule Britannia* so loudly that you cannot hear anything else. Your true patriot wants to see his country honoured among nations and, to this end, will watch his government critically, will be sensitive to outside opinion, and will support measures that are in the direction of world co-operation. Nowadays, a heady nationalism is foul play. Imagine a group of people bickering and fighting in a field;

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some will stand out as stronger than others at the expense of others. But imagine, again, those same people combined in a team; how much greater opportunity has each one now to show his merit. Thus does a co-operating world offer the nations new and splendid paths to glory.

To get rid of this 'my country-right-or-wrong' kind of patriotism is part of the process of moral disarmament. Similarly we have to disarm ourselves of *puny* patriotism. There are some people to whom the chief pleasures of travel apparently lie in making unfavourable comparisons. They pretend to themselves that they expect to find everything abroad as it is at home, and they hug themselves over anything that proves inferior. How contemptible is the policeman who could not direct them, how unsatisfactory the trains, how ridiculous that these foreigners cannot make tea, how inadequate is the breakfast provided, how absurd that the post boxes are not painted red! With such trifles they beat up to fever heat a perfectly natural emotion by which we love best what we know best. Thus are we made, and the foreigner in England, lying on our hard beds, suffering our restrained cordiality, eating our cabbage, drinking our coffee, knows the same nostalgia that we have known. It is strange that when away from our homeland we discover this instinctive affection for what is our own (an affection born, incidentally, of fear); it should help us a little to understand the same instinctive feelings in other people.

We have all to admit other nations on terms of equality. There is a story of a visitor to Heaven

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who found all the different religious sects enjoying together the delights of Paradise—all except one. The adherents of this were behind a curtain. ‘Why?’ asked the visitor. ‘Hush,’ said the angel-guide in a whisper. ‘They think they are alone.’ If the story were told of nations instead of religious bodies there would have to be a row of cubicles. Indeed, the story, so amended, would be a just representation of the national fantasy to which we fondly cling. In the closely curtained national Paradise which we have made for ourselves the individual life—which is the life that chiefly matters—is too narrowly confined. It may be the privilege of our time to remove the curtains.

## APPENDIX I

# THE COVENANT OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

### [THE PREAMBLE]

#### THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES

In order to promote international co-operation and to achieve international peace and security

by the acceptance of obligations not to resort to war,

by the prescription of open, just and honourable relations between nations,

by the firm establishment of the understandings of international law as the actual rule of conduct among Governments, and

by the maintenance of justice and a scrupulous respect for all treaty obligations in the dealings of organized peoples with one another,

Agree to this Covenant of the League of Nations.

### ARTICLE I [MEMBERSHIP]

1. The original Members of the League of Nations shall be those of the Signatories which are named in the Annex to this Covenant and also such of those other States named in the Annex as shall accede without reservation to this Covenant. Such accession shall be effected by a Declaration deposited with the Secretariat within two months of the coming into force of the

## THE LEAGUE IN OUR TIME

Covenant. Notice thereof shall be sent to all other Members of the League.

2. Any fully self-governing State, Dominion or Colony not named in the Annex may become a Member of the League if its admission is agreed to by two-thirds of the Assembly, provided that it shall give effective guarantees of its sincere intention to observe its international obligations, and shall accept such regulations as may be prescribed by the League in regard to its military, naval and air forces and armaments.

3. Any Member of the League may, after two years' notice of its intention so to do, withdraw from the League, provided that all its international obligations and all its obligations under this Covenant shall have been fulfilled at the time of its withdrawal.

### ARTICLE 2 [EXECUTIVE MACHINERY]

The action of the League under this Covenant shall be effected through the instrumentality of an Assembly and of a Council, with a permanent Secretariat.

### ARTICLE 3 [ASSEMBLY]

1. The Assembly shall consist of Representatives of the Members of the League.

2. The Assembly shall meet at stated intervals and from time to time as occasion may require at the Seat of the League or at such other place as may be decided upon.

3. The Assembly may deal at its meetings with any matter within the sphere of action of the League or affecting the peace of the world.

4. At meetings of the Assembly each Member of the League shall have one vote, and may have not more than three Representatives.

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### ARTICLE 4 [COUNCIL]

1. The Council shall consist of Representatives of the Principal Allied and Associated Powers,<sup>1</sup> together with Representatives of four other Members of the League. These four Members of the League shall be selected by the Assembly from time to time in its discretion. Until the appointment of the Representatives of the four Members of the League first selected by the Assembly, Representatives of Belgium, Brazil, Spain and Greece shall be members of the Council.

2. With the approval of the majority of the Assembly, the Council may name additional Members of the League whose Representatives shall always be Members of the Council (*a*); the Council with like approval may increase the number of Members of the League to be selected by the Assembly for representation on the Council (*b*).

*2 bis.<sup>2</sup> The Assembly shall fix by a two-thirds majority the rules dealing with the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council, and particularly such regulations as relate to their term of office and conditions of re-eligibility.*

3. The Council shall meet from time to time as occasion may require, and at least once a year, at the Seat of the League, or at such other place as may be decided upon.

4. The Council may deal at its meetings with any matter within the sphere of action of the League or affecting the peace of the world.

<sup>1</sup>The Principal Allied and Associated Powers are the following:—the United States of America, the British Empire, France, Italy and Japan (see Preamble of the Peace Treaty with Germany).

(*a*) In virtue of this paragraph of the Covenant, Germany was nominated as a Permanent Member of the Council on September 8th, 1926.

(*b*) The number of members of the Council selected by the Assembly was increased to six instead of four by virtue of a resolution adopted by the Third Assembly on September 25th, 1922. By a resolution taken by the Assembly on September 8th, 1926, the number of members of the Council selected by the Assembly was increased to nine.

<sup>2</sup> This Amendment came into force July 29th, 1926.



## THE LEAGUE IN OUR TIME

5. Any Member of the League not represented on the Council shall be invited to send a Representative to sit as a Member at any meeting of the Council during the consideration of matters specially affecting the interests of that Member of the League.

6. At meetings of the Council, each Member of the League represented on the Council shall have one vote, and may have not more than one Representative.

### ARTICLE 5 [VOTING AND PROCEDURE]

1. Except where otherwise expressly provided in this Covenant or by the terms of the present Treaty, decisions at any meeting of the Assembly or of the Council shall require the agreement of all the Members of the League represented at the meeting.

2. All matters of procedure at meetings of the Assembly or of the Council, including the appointment of Committees to investigate particular matters, shall be regulated by the Assembly or by the Council and may be decided by a majority of the Members of the League represented at the meeting.

3. The first meeting of the Assembly and the first meeting of the Council shall be summoned by the President of the United States of America.

### ARTICLE 6 [SECRETARIAT]

1. The permanent Secretariat shall be established at the Seat of the League. The Secretariat shall comprise a Secretary-General and such secretaries and staff as may be required.

2. The first Secretary-General shall be the person named in the Annex; thereafter the Secretary-General shall be appointed by the Council with the approval of the majority of the Assembly.

3. The secretaries and staff of the Secretariat shall be appointed by the Secretary-General with the approval of the Council.

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4. The Secretary-General shall act in that capacity at all meetings of the Assembly and of the Council.

5.<sup>1</sup> *The expenses of the League shall be borne by the Members of the League in the proportion decided by the Assembly.*

### ARTICLE 7 [SEAT. QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICIALS. IMMUNITIES]

1. The Seat of the League is established at Geneva.

2. The Council may at any time decide that the Seat of the League shall be established elsewhere.

3. All positions under or in connection with the League, including the Secretariat, shall be open equally to men and women.

4. Representatives of the Members of the League and officials of the League when engaged on the business of the League shall enjoy diplomatic privileges and immunities.

5. The buildings and other property occupied by the League or its officials or by Representatives attending its meetings shall be inviolable.

### ARTICLE 8 [REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS]

1. The Members of the League recognize that the maintenance of peace requires the reduction of national armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety and the enforcement by common action of international obligations.

2. The Council, taking account of the geographical situation and circumstances of each State, shall formulate plans for such reduction for the consideration and action of the several Governments.

3. Such plans shall be subject to reconsideration and revision at least every ten years.

<sup>1</sup>This amendment came into force on August 13th, 1924; the paragraph originally ran: "The expenses of the Secretariat shall be borne by the Members of the League in accordance with the apportionment of the expenses of the International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union."

## THE LEAGUE IN OUR TIME

4. After these plans shall have been adopted by the several Governments, the limits of armaments therein fixed shall not be exceeded without the concurrence of the Council.

5. The Members of the League agree that the manufacture by private enterprise of munitions and implements of war is open to grave objections. The Council shall advise how the evil effects attendant upon such manufacture can be prevented, due regard being had to the necessities of those Members of the League which are not able to manufacture the munitions and implements of war necessary for their safety.

6. The Members of the League undertake to interchange full and frank information as to the scale of their armaments, their military, naval and air programmes and the condition of such of their industries as are adaptable to war-like purposes.

### ARTICLE 9 [PERMANENT MILITARY COMMISSION]

A permanent Commission shall be constituted to advise the Council on the execution of the provisions of Articles 1 and 8 and on military, naval and air questions generally.

### ARTICLE 10 [GUARANTEES AGAINST AGGRESSION]

The Members of the League undertake to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League. In case of any such aggression or in case of any threat or danger of such aggression the Council shall advise upon the means by which this obligation shall be fulfilled.

### ARTICLE 11 [ACTION IN CASE OF WAR OR DANGER OF WAR]

1. Any war or threat of war, whether immediately affecting any of the Members of the League or not, is

## APPENDIX I

hereby declared a matter of concern to the whole League, and the League shall take any action that may be deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations. In case any such emergency should arise the Secretary-General shall on the request of any Member of the League forthwith summon a meeting of the Council.

2. It is also declared to be the friendly right of each Member of the League to bring to the attention of the Assembly or of the Council any circumstance whatever affecting international relations which threatens to disturb international peace or the good understanding between nations upon which peace depends.

### ARTICLE 12 [DISPUTES TO BE SUBMITTED TO ARBITRATION OR INQUIRY]<sup>1</sup>

1. The Members of the League agree that, if there should arise between them any dispute likely to lead to a rupture, they will submit the matter either to arbitration *or judicial settlement* or to inquiry by the Council and they agree in no case to resort to war until three months after the award by the arbitrators *or the judicial decision*, or the report by the Council.

2. In any case under this Article, the award of the arbitrators *or the judicial decision* shall be made within a reasonable time, and the report of the Council shall be made within six months after the submission of the dispute.

### ARTICLE 13 [ARBITRATION OF DISPUTES]<sup>1</sup>

1. The Members of the League agree that, whenever any dispute shall arise between them which they recognize to be suitable for submission to arbitration *or judicial settlement*, and which cannot be satisfactorily settled by diplomacy, they will submit the whole subject-matter to arbitration *or judicial settlement*.

<sup>1</sup> The Amendments in italics came into force on September 26th, 1924.

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2. Disputes as to the interpretation of a treaty, as to any question of international law, as to the existence of any fact which, if established, would constitute a breach of any international obligation, or as to the extent and nature of the reparation to be made for any such breach, are declared to be among those which are generally suitable for submission to arbitration *or judicial settlement*.

3. *For the consideration of any such dispute, the court to which the case is referred shall be the Permanent Court of International Justice, established in accordance with Article 14, or any tribunal agreed on by the parties to the dispute or stipulated in any convention existing between them.*

4. The Members of the League agree that they will carry out in full good faith any award *or decision* that may be rendered, and that they will not resort to war against any Member of the League that complies therewith. In the event of any failure to carry out such an award *or decision*, the Council shall propose what steps should be taken to give effect thereto.

### ARTICLE 14 [PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE]

The Council shall formulate and submit to the Members of the League for adoption plans for the establishment of a Permanent Court of International Justice. The Court shall be competent to hear and determine any dispute of an international character which the parties thereto submit to it. The Court may also give an advisory opinion upon any dispute or question referred to it by the Council or by the Assembly.

### ARTICLE 15 [DISPUTES NOT SUBMITTED TO ARBITRATION]<sup>1</sup>

1. If there should arise between Members of the League any dispute likely to lead to a rupture, which is not submitted to arbitration *or judicial settlement* in accordance

<sup>1</sup> The Amendments in italics came into force on September 26th, 1924.

## APPENDIX I

with Article 13, the Members of the League agree that they will submit the matter to the Council. Any party to the dispute may effect such submission by giving notice of the existence of the dispute to the Secretary-General, who will make all necessary arrangements for a full investigation and consideration thereof.

2. For this purpose the parties to the dispute will communicate to the Secretary-General, as promptly as possible, statements of their case, with all the relevant facts and papers, and the Council may forthwith direct the publication thereof.

3. The Council shall endeavour to effect a settlement of the dispute, and if such efforts are successful, a statement shall be made public giving such facts and explanations regarding the dispute and the terms of settlement thereof as the Council may deem appropriate.

4. If the dispute is not thus settled, the Council either unanimously or by a majority vote shall make and publish a report containing a statement of the facts of the dispute and the recommendations which are deemed just and proper in regard thereto.

5. Any Member of the League represented on the Council may make public a statement of the facts of the dispute and of its conclusions regarding the same.

6. If a report by the Council is unanimously agreed to by the members thereof other than the Representatives of one or more of the parties to the dispute, the Members of the League agree that they will not go to war with any party to the dispute which complies with the recommendations of the report.

7. If the Council fails to reach a report which is unanimously agreed to by the members thereof, other than the Representatives of one or more of the parties to the dispute, the Members of the League reserve to themselves the right to take such action as they shall

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consider necessary for the maintenance of right and justice.

8. If the dispute between the parties is claimed by one of them, and is found by the Council to arise out of a matter which by international law is solely within the domestic jurisdiction of that party, the Council shall so report, and shall make no recommendation as to its settlement.

9. The Council may in any case under this Article refer the dispute to the Assembly. The dispute shall be so referred at the request of either party to the dispute, provided that such request be made within fourteen days after the submission of the dispute to the Council.

10. In any case referred to the Assembly, all the provisions of this Article and of Article 12 relating to the action and powers of the Council shall apply to the action and powers of the Assembly, provided that a report made by the Assembly, if concurred in by the Representatives of those Members of the League represented on the Council and of a majority of the other Members of the League, exclusive in each case of the Representatives of the parties to the dispute, shall have the same force as a report by the Council concurred in by all the members thereof other than the Representatives of one or more of the parties to the dispute.

### ARTICLE 16 ["SANCTIONS" OF THE LEAGUE]

1. Should any Member of the League resort to war in disregard of its covenants under Article 12, 13, or 15, it shall *ipso facto* be deemed to have committed an act of war against all other Members of the League, which hereby undertake immediately to subject it to the severance of all trade or financial relations, the prohibition of all intercourse between their nationals and the nationals of the covenant-breaking State, and the prevention of all financial, commercial or personal intercourse between the

## APPENDIX I

nationals of the covenant-breaking State and the nationals of any other State, whether a Member of the League or not.

2. It shall be the duty of the Council in such case to recommend to the several Governments concerned what effective military, naval or air force the Members of the League shall severally contribute to the armed forces to be used to protect the covenants of the League.

3. The Members of the League agree, further, that they will mutually support one another in the financial and economic measures which are taken under this Article, in order to minimize the loss and inconvenience resulting from the above measures, and that they will mutually support one another in resisting any special measures aimed at one of their number by the covenant-breaking State, and that they will take the necessary steps to afford passage through their territory to the forces of the Members of the League which are operating to protect the covenants of the League.

4. Any Member of the League which has violated any covenant of the League may be declared to be no longer a Member of the League by a vote of the Council concurred in by the Representatives of all the other Members of the League represented thereon.

### ARTICLE 17 [DISPUTES WITH NON-MEMBERS]

1. In the event of a dispute between a Member of the League and a State which is not a Member of the League, or between States not Members of the League, the State or States not Members of the League shall be invited to accept the obligations of Membership in the League for the purposes of such dispute, upon such conditions as the Council may deem just. If such invitation is accepted, the provision of Articles 12 to 16 inclusive shall be applied with such modifications as may be deemed necessary by the Council.



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2. Upon such invitation being given the Council shall immediately institute an enquiry into the circumstances of the dispute and recommend such action as may seem best and most effectual in the circumstances.

3. If a State so invited shall refuse to accept the obligations of membership in the League for the purpose of such dispute, and shall resort to war against a Member of the League, the provisions of Article 16 shall be applicable as against the State taking such action.

4. If both parties to the dispute when so invited refuse to accept the obligations of membership in the League for the purposes of such dispute, the Council may take such measures and make such recommendations as will prevent hostilities and will result in the settlement of the dispute.

### ARTICLE 18 [REGISTRATION AND PUBLICATION OF ALL FUTURE TREATIES]

Every treaty or international engagement entered into hereafter by any Member of the League shall be forthwith registered with the Secretariat and shall as soon as possible be published by it. No such treaty or international engagement shall be binding until so registered.

### ARTICLE 19 [REVIEW OF TREATIES]

The Assembly may from time to time advise the reconsideration by Members of the League of treaties which have become inapplicable and the consideration of international conditions whose continuance might endanger the peace of the world.

### ARTICLE 20 [ABROGATION OF INCONSISTENT OBLIGATIONS]

1. The Members of the League severally agree that this Covenant is accepted as abrogating all obligations or understandings *inter se* which are inconsistent with the terms thereof, and solemnly undertake that they will not

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hereafter enter into any engagements inconsistent with the terms thereof.

2. In case any Member of the League shall, before becoming a Member of the League, have undertaken any obligations inconsistent with the terms of this Covenant, it shall be the duty of such Member to take immediate steps to procure its release from such obligations.

### ARTICLE 21 [ENGAGEMENTS THAT REMAIN VALID]

Nothing in the Covenant shall be deemed to affect the validity of international engagements, such as treaties of arbitration or regional understandings like the Monroe doctrine, for securing the maintenance of peace.

### ARTICLE 22 [MANDATES, CONTROL OF COLONIES AND TERRITORIES]

1. To those colonies and territories which as a consequence of the late war have ceased to be under the sovereignty of the States which formerly governed them and which are inhabited by peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world, there should be applied the principle that the well-being and development of such peoples form a sacred trust of civilization and that securities for the performance of this trust shall be embodied in this Covenant.

2. The best method of giving practical effect to this principle is that the tutelage of such peoples should be entrusted to advanced nations who by reason of their resources, their experience or their geographical position can best undertake this responsibility, and who are willing to accept it, and that this tutelage should be exercised by them as Mandatories on behalf of the League.

3. The character of the mandate must differ according to the stage of the development of the people, the

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geographical situation of the territory, its economic conditions and other similar circumstances.

### [ "A" Mandates ]

4. Certain communities formerly belonging to the Turkish Empire have reached a stage of development where their existence as independent nations can be provisionally recognized subject to the rendering of administrative advice and assistance by a Mandatory until such time as they are able to stand alone. The wishes of these communities must be a principal consideration in the selection of the Mandatory.

### [ "B" Mandates ]

5. Other peoples, especially those of Central Africa, are at such a stage that the Mandatory must be responsible for the administration of the territory under conditions which will guarantee freedom of conscience and religion, subject only to the maintenance of public order and morals, the prohibition of abuses such as the slave trade, the arms traffic and the liquor traffic, and the prevention of the establishment of fortifications or military and naval bases and of military training of the natives for other than police purposes and the defence of territory, and will also secure equal opportunities for the trade and commerce of other Members of the League.

### [ "C" Mandates ]

6. There are territories, such as South-West Africa and certain of the South Pacific Islands, which, owing to the sparseness of their population, or their small size, or their remoteness from the centres of civilization, or their geographical contiguity to the territory of the Mandatory, and other circumstances, can be best administered under

## APPENDIX I

the laws of the Mandatory as integral portions of its territory, subject to the safeguards above mentioned in the interests of the indigenous population.

7. In every case of mandate, the Mandatory shall render to the Council an annual report in reference to the territory committed to its charge.

8. The degree of authority, control, or administration to be exercised by the Mandatory shall, if not previously agreed upon by the Members of the League, be explicitly defined in each case by the Council.

9. A permanent Commission shall be constituted to receive and examine the annual reports of the Mandatories and to advise the Council on all matters relating to the observance of the mandates.

### ARTICLE 23 [SOCIAL ACTIVITIES]

Subject to and in accordance with the provisions of international conventions existing or hereafter to be agreed upon, the Members of the League:

(a) will endeavour to secure and maintain fair and humane conditions of labour for men, women, and children, both in their own countries and in all countries to which their commercial and industrial relations extend, and for that purpose will establish and maintain the necessary international organizations;

(b) undertake to secure just treatment of the native inhabitants of territories under their control;

(c) will entrust the League with the general supervision over the execution of agreements with regard to the traffic in women and children, and the traffic in opium and other dangerous drugs;

(d) will entrust the League with the general supervision of the trade in arms and ammunition with the countries in which the control of this traffic is necessary in the common interest;

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(e) will make provision to secure and maintain freedom of communications and of transit and equitable treatment for the commerce of all Members of the League. In this connection, the special necessities of the regions devastated during the war of 1914-1918 shall be borne in mind;

(f) will endeavour to take steps in matters of international concern for the prevention and control of disease.

### ARTICLE 24 [INTERNATIONAL BUREAUX]

1. There shall be placed under the direction of the League all international bureaux already established by general treaties if the parties to such treaties consent. All such international bureaux and all commissions for the regulation of matters of international interest hereafter constituted shall be placed under the direction of the League.

2. In all matters of international interest which are regulated by general conventions but which are not placed under the control of international bureaux or commissions, the Secretariat of the League shall, subject to the consent of the Council and if desired by the parties, collect and distribute all relevant information and shall render any other assistance which may be necessary or desirable.

3. The Council may include as part of the expenses of the Secretariat the expenses of any bureau or commission which is placed under the direction of the League.

### ARTICLE 25 [PROMOTION OF RED CROSS]

The Members of the League agree to encourage and promote the establishment and co-operation of duly authorized voluntary national Red Cross organizations having as purposes the improvement of health, the

## APPENDIX I

prevention of disease and the mitigation of suffering throughout the world.

### ARTICLE 26 [AMENDMENTS]

Amendments to this Covenant will take effect when ratified by the Members of the League whose Representatives compose the Council and by a majority of the Members of the League whose Representatives compose the Assembly.

No such amendment shall bind any Member of the League which signifies its dissent therefrom, but in that case it shall cease to be a Member of the League.



## APPENDIX II

### THE PACT OF PARIS (KELLOGG PACT)

The Pact of Paris is better known by this name. It is also sometimes called the Briand-Kellogg Pact, since it was M. Briand, Prime Minister of France, and Mr. Kellogg, Secretary of State in the United States, who were the instigators. The pact has been signed by 66 nations, that is practically the whole world. It went further than the Covenant in that the nations forswore war entirely as a method of settling their disputes (although this does not exclude war in the name of the League) and in that it applies to non-members (including Russia and U.S.A.) as well as members of the League. It did not, however, like the Covenant, make plans for action in the event of the pledge being broken. The following are the clauses:—

*ARTICLE I.* The High Contracting Parties solemnly declare in the names of their respective peoples, that they condemn recourse to war for the solution of international controversies, and renounce it as an instrument of national policy in their relations with one another.

*ARTICLE II.* The High Contracting Parties agree that the settlement or solution of all disputes or conflicts, of whatever nature or of whatever origin they may be, which may arise among them, shall never be sought except by pacific means.

*ARTICLE III.* The present Treaty shall be ratified by the High Contracting Parties named in



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the preamble in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements, and shall take effect as between them as soon as all their several instruments of ratification shall have been deposited at . . .

This Treaty shall, when it has come into effect as prescribed in the preceding paragraph, remain open as long as may be necessary for adherence by all the other Powers of the world. Every instrument evidencing the adherence of a Power shall be deposited at . . . and the Treaty shall, immediately upon such deposit, become effective as between the Power thus adhering and the other Powers parties thereto.

. It shall be the duty of the Government of . . . to furnish each Government named in the preamble, and every Government subsequently adhering to this Treaty, with a certified copy of this Treaty, and of every instrument of ratification or adherence. It shall also be the duty of the Government of . . . telegraphically to notify such Governments immediately upon the deposit with it of each instrument of ratification or adherence.

In faith whereof the respective plenipotentiaries have signed this Treaty in the French and English languages, both texts having equal force, and hereunto affixed their seals.

Done at Paris the 27th day of August in the Year of Our Lord, one thousand nine hundred and twenty-eight.

APPENDIX III  
GLOSSARY  
OF TERMS USED IN CONNECTION WITH THE  
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

ASSEMBLY

This is the general meeting of the States-Members of the League of Nations, each nation sending not more than three chief delegates (but any number of substitute delegates and technical advisors). The business of an ordinary assembly is to review the whole work of the League as carried out through the Council, the Secretariat and the Commissions of experts; it also settles the League's budget. After a general debate the Assembly divides itself into six committees, to each being assigned a section of the League's work for review, viz.:

- (1) legal and constitutional questions,
- (2) technical questions,
- (3) disarmament,
- (4) the budget,
- (5) social questions,
- (6) political questions.

Each committee reports the results of its deliberations to the full Assembly and there decisions may be made.

The ordinary meetings of the Assembly are held annually, in September; but a Special Assembly

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may be called at the request of one of its members and by the approval of a majority.

(See also Chapter I.)

### COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSIT

The work of the League for better communications between nations is in the hands of the Advisory Committee for Communications and Transit, a General Conference which meets every four years and a secretariat which is part of the League Secretariat. The whole forms the Communications and Transit Organization and is semi-autonomous. The work of this organization has not been dealt with in this book owing to its technical nature.

### CONVENTION

An agreement drawn up by the Assembly of the League is often thus named. It does not come into force until it has been ratified (q.v.) by some specified number of States Members (e.g. Slavery convention).

The measures drawn up by the I.L.O. at its annual conference are either Conventions or Recommendations, the latter being as the name implies more tentative decisions which may afterwards become Conventions.

### COST OF THE LEAGUE

The total estimated cost for 1933 was 33,429,132 gold francs or £1,335,100 at the old rate of exchange.

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This seemingly large sum is about one seventh of the cost of a modern battleship. It is divided among the fifty-seven countries that make up the League in accordance with their population and property. The scale of contribution was planned by an expert committee that assigned to each member so many units of whatever might be the annual cost. A unit is a sum of money which varies from year to year according to the number of members and the total amount of the budget. The scheme is elastic so that the proportion borne by any one country may be reduced if there is a good reason (e.g. when Japan suffered from a disastrous earthquake).

Great Britain at present pays the largest contribution—£182,000 which is equal to the cost of eighteen large tanks. It costs the British taxpayer a fraction of a farthing on every pound he pays in taxes.

In 1932 Great Britain urged, with some success, a ten per cent. reduction in the League Budget. The Spanish delegate pointed out that this would relieve the British taxpayer to the extent of less than one-tenth of a farthing in each pound he paid.

The new League buildings are already practically paid for by contributions collected in the last few years. The cost is just over a million pounds, i.e. one third of the cost of the recently built offices of the London County Council. The Library is to be paid for by the Rockefeller foundation.

The total salary and allowance of the Secretary-General (the highest paid League official) is approximately half what an important ambassador is likely to receive.

## THE LEAGUE IN OUR TIME

### COUNCIL

This consists of five permanent States-Members of the League of Nations and nine non-permanent States-Members. Each States-Member is represented by one delegate. The permanent members are the Great Powers : The British Empire, France, Germany, Italy, Japan. If the United States joined the League she would have a permanent seat on the Council. Each year the Assembly elects three of the non-permanent members and they hold office for three years ; after that time they are not re-eligible unless voted so by the Assembly. The Council deals with any of the League's work but has also special duties such as the supervision of mandates, protecting minorities, looking after the Saar Territory and the Free City of Danzig, and the settling of international disputes. It meets several times a year.

(See also Chapter I.)

### DANZIG

This port was taken from Germany by the Peace Treaty with a view to giving Poland 'free and secure access to the sea.' It connects with Poland by means of the Polish Corridor (q.v.) but is itself a Free City under the protection of the League. Its constitution, which provides for an elected Popular Assembly and Senate, was approved by the League Council in 1922 and it cannot be modified without the League's consent. A resident High Commissioner represents the League. Poland has certain economic rights within the city and may be invited by the High

### APPENDIX III

Commissioner to defend the city or to supplement the Danzig police should need arise. The city is not allowed to manufacture or store munitions.

#### LEAGUE OF NATIONS UNION

This is a British Society which aims at interesting and educating people in the League of Nations and thus developing that public opinion without which the League cannot work. It is non-party and non-sectarian. Similar societies exist in most Member-States of the League.

#### MEMBER-STATES OF THE LEAGUE

(Membership in 1933=57. Original membership in 1920=42.)

Abyssinia		China
Albania		Colombia
Argentina		Cuba
Austria		Czechoslovakia
Belgium		Denmark
Bolivia		Estonia
British Empire		Finland
Australia		France
Canada		Germany
India	} Individually Represented	Greece
Irish Free State		Guatemala
New Zealand		Haiti
South Africa		Honduras
Bulgaria		Hungary
Chile		Iraq

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Italy	Peru
Japan (under notice of withdrawal)	Poland
Latvia	Portugal
Liberia	Roumania
Lithuania	Salvador
Luxemburg	San Domingo
Mexico	Siam
Netherlands	Spain
Nicaragua	Sweden
Norway	Switzerland
Panama	Turkey
Paraguay	Uruguay
Persia	Venezuela
	Yugoslavia

### NON-MEMBER STATES

In Europe: Russia.

In America: United States, Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico.

In Asia: Afghanistan, Hedjaz.

In Africa: Egypt.

Non-members frequently collaborate with the League. They remain outside for various reasons. The United States was unwilling, after the War, to be embroiled in European problems and the two-thirds majority vote in the Senate was not obtained when a vote on her proposed adherence was taken. She has nevertheless collaborated with the League in its humanitarian work and stood with it in times of crisis, e.g. the Far Eastern Dispute. Russia remains outside because as a communist country she does not wish to join with capitalist powers ; but she has

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accepted the League's invitation to join with it on the questions of Disarmament and the World Economic Conference. Brazil left the League in 1927, ostensibly because she was not given the status of a Great Power. Costa Rica and Argentine also withdrew their membership in the first few years, presumably out of indifference.

#### OPTIONAL CLAUSE

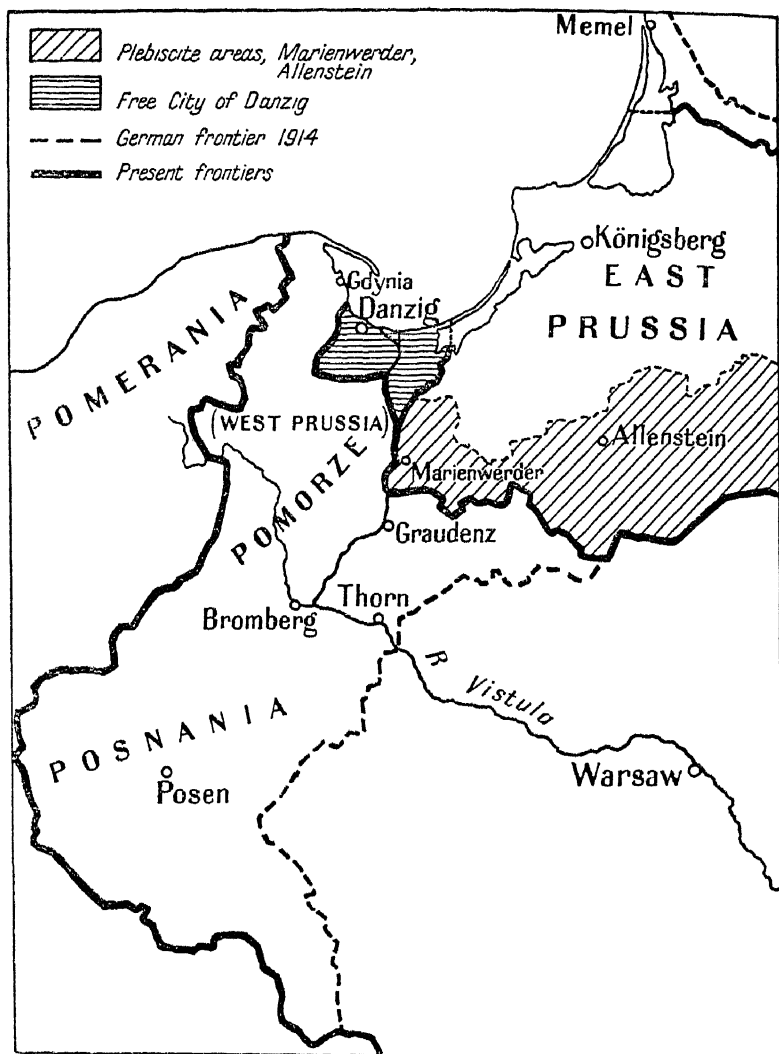
Countries that sign this clause, which is attached to the Protocol of Signature of the Permanent Court of International Justice, accept as compulsory the jurisdiction of the Court in legal disputes. They cannot refuse to be brought before the Court by other countries and they are bound to accept the Court's verdict.

#### POLISH CORRIDOR

Before the war Poland had no access to the sea, although from the tenth to the eighteenth century she had continually struggled for, and mostly held, some part of the Baltic coast round the mouth of the Vistula. The thirteenth of the Fourteen Points which were the basis of the Armistice in 1918 promised Poland independence with 'free and secure access to the sea.' The Peace Conference was therefore bound to alter the frontier between Germany and Poland. Danzig at the mouth of the Vistula was made a Free City, but a strip of land west and south of Danzig was given to Poland. This area which includes the former German



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THE POLISH CORRIDOR

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states of Pomorze and Posnania, was given to Poland and forms the so-called 'Polish Corridor.' In linking the rest of Poland with the sea it completely cuts off East Prussia from the rest of Germany. The two provinces of Marienwerder and Allenstein, to the south of East Prussia, were assigned to Germany as the result of a plebiscite. The groups of Germans in various parts of the 'corridor' are provided for by minority treaties and are therefore under the protection of the League Council. Germany naturally resents the alteration of her eastern frontier, especially since it cuts off East Prussia. The Corridor is therefore one of the danger spots in Europe.

(See also under Danzig.)

#### RAPPORTEUR

Every expert committee under the Council of the League chooses a spokesman who can report to the Council about the work and proposals of the Committee. Similarly when the Assembly divides itself up into committees each of these has its spokesman or *rapporteur* who will speak on behalf of the committee to the full Assembly.

#### RATIFICATION

Every measure planned by the Assembly is first open to the signatures of the chief delegates of all the countries represented. But these signatures carry no weight until the right authority in the delegate's own country has agreed to or ratified the

## THE LEAGUE IN OUR TIME

measure. This authority may be the King, or it may be the Parliament, according to the constitution or practice of the country.

### SAAR TERRITORY

This was formerly a part of Germany but by the Treaty of Versailles the coalfields here were given to France in compensation for the mines destroyed in Northern France in the War, and the government of the territory was put under the trusteeship of the League of Nations for fifteen years. At the end of that time the inhabitants are to decide by plebiscite whether they will continue under the League, become part of Germany, or be united to France. In the meantime a Commission of Five appointed by the Council governs the territory. One member of the Commission has to be a French citizen, one a native of the territory who is not a French citizen and the other three must belong to countries other than France and Germany.

The Saar Commissioners are appointed for a year, but may be re-appointed. They entirely take the place of pre-War German government, but it was made clear to them from the beginning that their sole interest should be the welfare of the inhabitants. An advisory council is chosen by the native born people of the territory and this body is consulted by the Commissioners. The inhabitants have also the right to petition the Council. Such petitions must go first to the Governing Commissioner who must forward them to the League Council with or without comment.

## APPENDIX III

### SANCTIONS

This is the name given to the various measures, referred to in Article XVI of the Covenant, whereby the League may compel a country that dishonours its pledges to comply with the demands of the League.

### SECRETARIAT

This is the League's permanent Civil Service and consists of over 600 persons drawn from over fifty countries. Its Head is the Secretary-General who is appointed by the Council with the approval of the majority of the Assembly. He is assisted by a Deputy Secretary-General and several Under Secretaries-General. The Secretariat is divided into sections, e.g. Financial and Economic Section, Mandates Section, Health Section, Disarmament Section, etc., with a Director in control of each. There is at present a good deal of international rivalry over the chief appointments at the Secretariat.  
(See also Chapter I.)

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR NEW EDITION

### NEW LEAGUE MEMBERS

Russia, Ecuador, Afghanistan.

### WITHDRAWALS FROM THE LEAGUE

Japan, Germany.

### SAAR TERRITORY

This was transferred to Germany early in 1935 as the result of an overwhelming vote of the inhabitants. Owing to Nazi propaganda excitement ran very high and at one time it looked as though the plebiscite could not be carried through without violence. The final orderly arrangements, maintained by an international military force, were a considerable success for the League.

### THE DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE

Having first met in February 1932 the Conference remained in being for nearly four years and then was finally suspended without arriving at any general agreement, while the nations set about their programmes for re-armament.

Mr. Arthur Henderson, the Conference's devoted chairman who spent the last remnants of his health in trying to bring the Conference to a successful end, attributed the failure chiefly to a lack of confidence. A certain measure of mutual confidence seems to be necessary before we can hope to see the nations agree

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to limit their arms. The Disarmament Conference met before that minimum of confidence was established and the course of political events while it was in being was of a nature to add to the general unease in the world. During the years 1932-1935 Japan and Germany left the League, Mussolini and Hitler continually upheld the military ideal to their peoples, a wasteful and unnecessary war broke out between Paraguay and Bolivia and, in a series of startling assassinations, the king of Jugo-Slavia, the Foreign Minister of France and the Chancellor of Austria met their deaths.

## A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE DISPUTE BETWEEN ITALY AND ABYSSINIA

When the first delegates from Ethiopia entered the Assembly Hall of the League of Nations in September 1923 it was one of the League's dramatic moments. Not only was the native costume of the newcomers striking among a European-clad audience, but the presence of the dark natives in black cloaks and full white trousers represented an earnest wish on the part of their young ruler—still only Regent—to make his country a civilized state.

The assembled nations had not acceded to the request for membership without demur. The uncertain authority of the Regent, the institution of slavery, the backwardness of the people, had provoked doubts. Great Britain in particular had been in opposition. Italy, on the other hand, had warmly

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supported the request. Finally it had been agreed that if Abyssinia pledged herself to abolish slavery and prevent the smuggling of firearms she should be admitted into the society of nations.

No doubt Abyssinia felt that in joining the League she was safeguarding her territory from aggression. Did not Article X of the Covenant plainly guarantee this integrity to its members? And Abyssinia, surrounded entirely by conquered territories belonging to Great Britain, France and Italy, had particular reason to be anxious about her 'integrity.' Moreover, all the rest of Africa had at one time or another been conquered by European powers—all, that is, except Liberia, and she was financially dependent on the United States. Alone of all African peoples the Abyssinians stood in complete independence, their great courage assisted by the natural fortifications of the land. They were proud of their independence as they were proud of their history and religion, tracing their rulers back to the famous Queen of Sheba and their Coptic Christianity to the fourth century after Christ. No one but explorers and adventurers had crossed the torrid deserts that are the outlying regions of Ethiopia and climbed the high and fertile tableland where the true Abyssinians, the dominant Amharic race, lived in careless freedom.

Less than three years after Abyssinia's first appearance at Geneva the Regent became aware that Great Britain and Italy were exchanging notes in which they seemed to be supporting each other's designs in Abyssinia. Such a correspondence had happened before and in pre-League days Great

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Britain, Italy and France had agreed with each other on respective 'spheres of interest'; but any such agreements were ruled out now by the League Covenant and Abyssinia's status as a League member. Nevertheless it appeared that Great Britain was purporting to build a barrage in Lake Tana (to ensure the combined safety for Egypt and the Sudan of the waters of the Blue Nile), and Italy was hoping to build a railway across the country from her colony of Eritrea in the north to Italian Somaliland in the south.

The Regent, perceiving that the two powers might be going to join and exert pressure on him, protested to the League:

'The people of Abyssinia are anxious to do right and we have every intention of guiding them along the path of improvement and progress; but throughout their history they have seldom met with foreigners who did not desire to possess themselves of Abyssinian territory and to destroy their independence. With God's help, and thanks to the courage of our soldiers, we have always, come what might, stood proud and free upon our native mountains.'

Britain and Italy then wrote to Geneva explaining away what had seemed like intended coercion. Abyssinia accepted the explanations and the matter dropped.

After this incident the Great Powers seemed to accept Abyssinia as a sovereign state and in fact two years later, in 1928, Italy signed a Treaty of Friendship with her as an equal.<sup>1</sup> By this treaty both

<sup>1</sup> Article I of the Treaty reads:—'There shall be constant peace and perpetual friendship between the Kingdom of Italy and the Abyssinian Empire.'



## THE LEAGUE IN OUR TIME

Abyssinia and Italy recognized each other's independence, promised to promote trade between them and vowed to submit any disputes to peaceful settlement.

It was in the year following the treaty that Italy carried out a reorganization of her Somaliland colony and moved her outposts about sixty-five miles into Abyssinia, beyond the now famous oasis at Walwal. This neighbourhood was at the time ruled by local chiefs over whom the Emperor had had little control. Therefore no protest was made by the Emperor at the moment—indeed he seems to have been unaware of the change. But when, towards the end of 1934, some Abyssinian troops arrived at Walwal they found their way blocked by Italian soldiers. As it happened the Abyssinian soldiers were an escort to some British officials who were settling the routes of wandering tribes from British Somaliland. The British officer in charge found the Italian captain very provocative, and after making his protest he retired as soon as possible to avoid adding to the trouble, but the Abyssinian soldiers believed the ground to be theirs and camped opposite the Italians and their native troops. An angry correspondence passed between the opposing lines and finally fighting broke out. The Abyssinians were defeated and had to retreat, but Haile Selassie refused the Italian demand that the Italian flag should be saluted at Walwal and a compensation paid to the Italian Government.

This frontier incident did not at first appear to be of very great importance. True the Regent sent a protest to the League and then appealed under

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Article XI, the article which declares it is the 'friendly right' of each member of the League to draw the League's attention to any circumstance that might disturb international peace or the good understanding between nations. However, Italy was very emphatic that it would only exaggerate a local dispute to make it a League concern and since both countries seemed agreed to settle the matter between themselves according to their Treaty of Friendship of 1928, the League Council left the matter for the time being.

In the months that followed, however, this small cloud grew until it darkened the sky. Mussolini, still insisting to the other powers that he had no aggressive intentions, held up on one pretext or another the arbitration arrangements that Abyssinia demanded under the Treaty of Friendship. Also he sent regular detachments of troops to the Italian colonies bordering on Abyssinia, declaring that he must protect these areas against the Abyssinian menace. The Italian newspapers (controlled by the Fascist government) paid great attention to Abyssinia and were at pains to describe the barbaric customs of the people. They spoke of Italy's civilizing mission to Ethiopia.

Abyssinia grew increasingly alarmed. The Emperor appealed to the League under Articles X and XV.

Italy still maintained that all her measures were defensive and that the League was making a mistake to interfere. Under pressure from the Council, however, Mussolini finally agreed to arbitration of the Walwal dispute, but he would only allow that

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one of the two points should be submitted to judgment. He would agree to arbitration on the question, who began the fighting? But not on the more important question, to whom did the land belong? It was clear that Italy was going to brook no argument on this second point. Her more recent maps showed Walwal as clearly in Italian territory.

The arbitration proceedings began at the end of the summer of 1935, but by then it was clear that Walwal was a pretext for something more sinister and when on the opening day of the League's September Council meeting the arbitrators reported that neither side could be held responsible for the outbreak at Walwal and that it was possible that the first shot had been fired by accident, the decision was unimportant in face of the growing certainty that Mussolini meant war.

The League was by now preoccupied with the dispute. During August the British, French and Italian representatives, with the authority of the Council, had been exploring possibilities of a peaceful settlement. Mr. Eden and Mr. Laval had gone as far as making proposals that amounted to an offer of bribery to Italy; but Mussolini remained uninterested.

Now, a day or two before the sixteenth Assembly, the Council met. The room was crowded with anxious spectators and journalists when the delegates assembled round the horseshoe table. It was the turn of the Argentine delegate to take the chair. The Secretary General sat by him, and to the left and right Mr. Eden and Mr. Laval. Baron Aloisi sat

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next to Mr. Laval. Abyssinia, not being a member of the Council except for the purposes of this dispute, did not at first take her place with the others. In the atmosphere of anxious anticipation the President called her to the table.

Mr. Eden was then asked to speak. He reported on the Paris conversations and Italy's refusal to consider the suggestions that he and M. Laval had drawn up. Then he made a statement on behalf of this country which answered the question that everyone was asking—would Great Britain be in favour of sanctions as projected in Article XVI of the Covenant?

‘The machinery of the new order set up by the Covenant is here in Geneva,’ said Mr. Eden; ‘if its spirit also is here we cannot fail. It is because His Majesty's Government are acutely conscious of their responsibilities as a member of the League, because they are prepared to fulfil their share of such responsibilities, that I can assure my colleagues of our most whole-hearted co-operation in the difficult task which confronts us all.’

People used to interpreting the careful language of statesmen said to themselves: ‘So Great Britain is for sanctions.’

M. Laval then spoke on the part of France. He clung to a hope that Italy might be dissuaded from war by some suitable proposal. It was clear that France was against sanctions.

The next speaker was Baron Aloisi, for Italy. As he addressed the Council, secretaries bowed under piled documents came in and presented a voluminous copy of the Italian case to each member of the

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Council. For the first time Baron Aloisi gave Italy's defence of her actions. Briefly this rested on the following allegations: Abyssinia, a backward country with an unstable government and ill-defined frontiers, was a menace to Italy's African possessions. Moreover, slavery still existed. The members of the League could not be expected to keep the rules of the Covenant with a country that had continually failed to observe them.

'Italy's dignity as a civilized nation would be deeply wounded were she to continue a discussion in the League on a footing of equality with Ethiopia.'

Dramatic emphasis was laid on the last statement the next day when the Abyssinian delegate, having asked to be allowed a day's pause before replying to the Italian charge, was putting his country's case. During the first sentences of his speech Baron Aloisi got up from his place and walked out.

It was the Abyssinian delegate who put the real case for Italy, the case that lay behind insults and exaggerations, the case that had appeared in the Italian press and was well known to every onlooker.

'The Italian Government did not say it at the Council, but it has frequently proclaimed that it was seeking outlets for its population and that Ethiopia seemed to it very suitable and desirable to be taken as a colony.'

Thus Abyssinia herself announced one of the two main reasons for Italy's preparations for war. The other reason could not be announced publicly, but it was well known again to all observers that war is an ideal of the Fascist State and that a military

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enterprise will put new heart into a people who are finding that an idolized Dictator has not yet given them the prosperity that he promised.

As for the bogus case that Baron Aloisi had been at pains to state, there was little need for Abyssinia to rebuff the charges with which it was concerned. The League Council was well aware that the Emperor, as head of the feudal system still obtaining in Ethiopia, did not have absolute hold over all his feudal chieftains—not for all his splendid titles, ‘Lion of Judah,’ ‘King of Kings.’ But his authority was growing as steadily as slavery was being abolished. As for the frontier menace from disorderly tribes, this is a difficulty common to all European colonies in Africa. It may be dismissed in the comment of one observer who stated that a district official who could not deal with frontier incidents did not deserve to hold his job.

Now came the Assembly, following close on the Council. In the general debate which occupies the first few days of each regular Assembly meeting any subject may be introduced. This year every delegate entered the Assembly Hall with one subject and one only in his mind.

Who was to be the first to introduce it? The lead was given to Great Britain.

Then Sir Samuel Hoare, the British Foreign Minister, opened the most critical of all League Assemblies with a speech such as Geneva had long waited for from Great Britain. The feeling hitherto had been that British Governments did not really care about the Covenant. Samuel Hoare without any high sounding phrases or rhetorical flourishes

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made it clear that Great Britain now intended unequivocally to stand for collective security.<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps the result of the Peace Ballot had revealed to British Ministers the real state of public opinion in England. Certainly Samuel Hoare continually referred to British public opinion as though it was from the people of England rather than from Downing Street that he drew his authority.

Side by side with this convincing declaration of loyalty to the system of collective security there came a statement referring to the inaccessibility of raw materials as a cause of discontent. Samuel Hoare said his country was prepared to investigate this problem. This announcement was received with acclamation by all those who perceived that one of the causes of this as of other disputes in the present troubled world lies in the sense of economic suffocation which the 'have not' countries feel.

When the delegates poured out they were in a ferment of excitement. At last Great Britain had taken the lead to peace.

In the days that followed thirty other countries voiced their opinions and early among them Abyssinia made her appeal. M. Tede Hawariate, who spoke for her, a small melancholy man, with great dignity of manner, pressed home his case well.

'We, who have been described as barbarians,' he said, 'have given manifold proof of our great toleration, our spirit of patience and our sincere humility. . . .

The Ethiopian people is waiting in increasing distress of mind as the fatal moment approaches, and addresses

<sup>1</sup> 'The League stands, and my country stands with it, for the collective maintenance of the Covenant in its entirety, and particularly for steady and collective resistance to all acts of unprovoked aggression.'

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yet more urgently a supreme appeal to the heart of humanity. This appeal it sends out to all men and women of goodwill throughout the world, that they may not allow this great injustice to be done. . . .'

That the injustice should not be done was especially the concern of the smaller and weaker powers who spoke in the debate, they saw the crisis as a struggle between might and right. Italy herself did not speak.

Meantime a committee of five members of the Council had been working out a possible peace plan, according to Article XV, paragraph 3 of the Covenant. An elaborate charter of assistance was drawn up by which Abyssinia's internal affairs were to be reformed by a body of foreign specialists. The Abyssinian Emperor immediately accepted the general principle of the solution. Mussolini did not deign to reply, but a communiqué emerged from the Italian Cabinet saying it was unacceptable.

The Council therefore decided to proceed with Paragraph 4 of Article XV. Paragraph 3 is an attempt at conciliation; Paragraph 4 calls for judgment.

Meanwhile the Assembly came to an end. About the same time the Emperor withdrew his frontier forces 18 miles behind the boundary to avoid any incidents. He asked the Council to send observers, but the Council could not agree to do this. The Emperor warned the Council that he must mobilize his frontier forces in readiness.

A few days later the people of Italy were summoned into all public squares and village piazzas



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to hear Mussolini's great proclamation to his people. He said that Italy had been patient with Ethiopia long enough. He defied the League's threat of sanctions.

The next day without further warning Italian armies penetrated Ethiopia in the north and south, crossing the torrid plains with tanks and lorries and proceeding at once, in defiance of the laws of war, to bombard undefended towns.

Immediately the war-drum beat in Addis Ababa and the drummer commanded all to listen while the Emperor called his people to war.

From village to village the war-drum was heard proclaiming a general mobilization.

In three days' time Adowa fell and Italians gave thanks to heaven for this revenge of an insult of 40 years back when an Italian adventurer had been defeated here by an inferior race.

The Council had already met in Geneva. It had before it its own report drawn up according to Article XV, paragraph 4 of the Covenant. That report gave a history of the dispute and a clear answer to Italy's charges. It pointed out that it was for the Council to judge whether Abyssinia was fit to be a member of the League, that Italy had never stated her complaints against Abyssinia until a month ago, and that now by resorting to war she had made it impossible for the League to conduct an enquiry into the internal conditions of Ethiopia. 'Any violation of the covenant,' it concluded, 'should be immediately brought to an end.'

Baron Aloisi's reply to this was that Italy had 'fallen a victim to Ethiopian aggression.'

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M. Tecte Hawariate appealed for sanctions under Article 16.

On the afternoon of Monday, October 7th, the day after the fall of Adowa, there was a public session of the Council. Judgment was to be passed on Italy. Baron Aloisi at a private session had made a last minute attempt at securing the postponement of the public meeting. He had pleaded the necessity to consult with Rome. Mr. Eden had replied that while they were talking men were being killed.

And so before a crowded room and in an atmosphere of great gravity the President read aloud the whole of Article XV of the Covenant.

He asked for a note as to whether or not the findings of the Council should be accepted. In dead silence the name of each country represented on the Council was called.

‘Republique Argentine.

‘Yes.’

‘Australia.’

‘Yes.’

‘United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.’

‘Yes.’

And so on. Only Italy replied ‘No.’ Italy was condemned.

Sanctions must now be applied. The only question was how. Never before in the fifteen years of the League’s existence had Article XVI been brought fully into play. That Article makes it the separate duty of each individual State-member to cut off trade relations with the covenant-breaking State. Military sanctions, if any, have to be carried

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out on the advice of the Council. But military sanctions were not seriously envisaged. The immediate problem was to enable all the countries in the League to co-operate over non-military sanctions. Years ago an Assembly had declared that in an emergency like this it would be necessary for the States to act together and had pointed out that it might be best to apply sanctions in successive stages.

The Assembly which had only been adjourned and not concluded met again. The President put to the whole League the decision of the Council that sanctions must be applied. He said he would not take a roll-call but he would interpret silence as consent. Any countries that did not agree must speak. Austria and Hungary disassociated themselves from the general decision, both being countries under Italy's influence.

The next day Baron Aloisi, for the first time, put his case to the Assembly. He complained that Italy's charges against Abyssinia had not been studied. He spoke again of slavery and savagery in Abyssinia. He said his country was acting in self-defence. He asked why sanctions had not been discussed in former disputes, notably in the conflict between China and Japan.

Nevertheless, by their silence, fifty nations out of fifty-four condemned Italy, and a special co-ordinating committee representing eighteen countries was set up to work out a plan for sanctions.

It was agreed that the arms embargo that had hitherto been applied to both countries should be raised from Abyssinia but applied against Italy.

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Foreign loans to Italy were prohibited.

No goods from Italy were to be received by the other countries.

Certain exports to Italy were to be stopped.

Of these decisions the most important was the ban on all Italian goods. It throttled Italy's foreign trade.

On November 18th, 1935, these sanctions came into force. Three days before the United States made a declaration which virtually meant support for the League from that country.

Meanwhile the Italian people, knowing nothing except what the Fascist government wished them to know, was brought to a pitch of patriotism and war-mindedness. Mussolini defied sanctions and carried on his war. Gradually he penetrated in the north and south with his highly mechanized armies. The Abyssinians, equipped for the most part with obsolete weapons and having only had an air force of 9 old aeroplanes and three qualified pilots, avoided for the most part any massed collision with the invaders but harried them under cover of darkness.

Mussolini seemed determined to use all the horrible power of modern warfare to intimidate the enemy before the Great Rains began in June. Ruthlessly, open towns were bombarded against the accepted rules of war and contrary to a convention signed by Italy in 1925, poison gas was poured mercilessly upon the soldiers and the village people. Red Cross units sent out by European countries were not spared.

The important question of adding oil to the other sanctions had arisen. A great section of pub-

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lic opinion in England and elsewhere urged that all oil and other fuel should be withheld from Italy. Oil experts who were asked by the Council to make an investigation reported that if the United States co-operated in the prohibition Italy's oil supplies could only last for about three and a half months. Even without the help of America the campaign would be considerably hindered. Italy's mechanized warfare with her bombing planes, tanks and lorries were more dependent on fuel than on almost anything else.

The application of the oil sanction was held up by France who, whenever there was a chance of it being applied, suggested that an effort at finding a peace plan should be made. Just before Christmas Sir Samuel Hoare stopped in Paris on his way to Switzerland for a holiday. He met M. Laval, then French Foreign Secretary, and the outcome was the now notorious Hoare-Laval peace proposals. The proposals, if adopted, would have presented Italy with the major part of Ethiopia. The plan was received with indignation by Ethiopia and was unacceptable to Mussolini. Public opinion in Great Britain and to a less extent in France was outraged to such an extent that first Sir Samuel Hoare and then M. Laval had to depart from the international stage. The League Council never discussed the proposals.

M. Flandin, successor to M. Laval, had succeeded in effecting a second postponement of oil sanctions when Hitler suddenly broke the Treaty of Locarno by marching his soldiers into the Rhineland. This was a tremendous blow to such security as there

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was in Europe. The Locarno Treaty, unlike the Versailles Treaty, was entered into freely by Germany some years after the war. It was her first step towards an equal footing with the other Great Powers. By it she had the promise of British and Italian assistance in the event of an attack from France, and France had the same guarantee in the event of a German act of aggression. Germany herself had suggested the permanent demilitarization of the Rhineland zone as a contribution to general security. The Treaty was made under the blessing of the League and although negotiated before Hitler's arrival in power it had been personally and publicly reaffirmed by him.

Hitler justified his *coup* by declaring that France's recent treaty with Russia was virtually in opposition to Locarno. He considered that treaty dead and offered a new set of peace guarantees in its place. France was unimpressed by these since they were preceded by the tearing up of a solemn undertaking. She offered some counter proposals. Finally Great Britain agreed to seek from Hitler some satisfactory assurances that he really desired peace despite his recent action and the formidable growth of German armaments.

What with this embroil and with France unable to commit herself to any foreign policy until after the general election that was upon her, the chances of an oil sanction became remote. Italy in a race with the Rains hurled all her weight against the retreating Abyssinians. The Emperor personally led and encouraged his warriors. The Empress and the Princess, making gas-masks in the capital, appealed

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again and again to all people of goodwill throughout the world. But the Italians were already in sight of victory. As they approached the capital the Emperor took his departure into exile with his family. A tragic and defeated little company, they made their slow way to the coast by Abyssinia's only railway and finally sought refuge under British protection in Palestine.

The Italians entered Addis Abba with ceremony, and to an Italy frantic with enthusiasm Mussolini proclaimed Abyssinia to be henceforth Italian.

The epilogue is a series of questions that relate to the immediate future. Will the nations acquiesce in Abyssinia becoming an Italian colony? Can this success satisfy Italy's needs for raw materials, for markets, for population outlet, and for prestige? How will Japan and Germany be similarly satisfied? Would not economic needs be better met by negotiation and must national greatness be always a matter of military strength?

